ROADRUNNER

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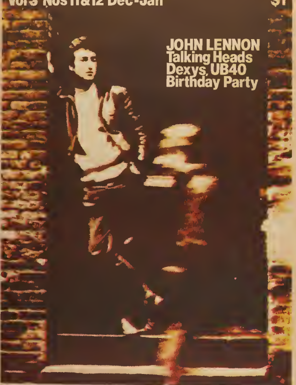
$1

JOHN LENNON
Talking Heads
Dexys, UB40
Birthday Party



Malicious Gossip

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Malicious Gossip

As the year draws to a close it seems that rock n roll in NSW is once more under attack. You may recall earlier this year that Section 57(A) of the NSW Licensing Act was going to be changed such that all hotels putting on live entertainment were going to have their hours severely cut. Well that proposition was postponed until after the summer but it seems that the Licensing authorities still haven't found it in their hearts to love rock n roll. Two of the biggest proposed events of the summer in NSW the Tanelorn Festival which was to be held on the Australia Day weekend and was expected to attract 100 000 people and Cold Chisel's New Years Eve show at the Cronulla Rugby Ground have both been cancelled due to the failure of either promoter to obtain a liquor licence.

TANELORN
a
festival of transition
THREE DAYS OF MUSIC, CULTURE & CELEBRATION

Rod Willis the manager of Cold Chisel and the promoter of the New Year's Eve show said the reason given for the refusal of the licence was the violence at last year's Sydney Opera House show when the Angels had to leave the stage after being hit with bottles, and an incident at the Newcastle Palais Royal on Cold Chisel's current show. But Willis made the pertinent point that as a result of the cancellation there will be 15,000 people loose in cars and on the street with as much alcohol as they can drink this New Year's Eve. "We had top security organised. There would have been a ban on bringing alcohol into the grounds but there would have been alcohol available through the ground facilities. It would have been a controlled situation."

The incident in Newcastle was blown up out of all proportion, according to Willis. Although it was called a riot on the front page of the Newcastle Sun most of the crowd and Cold Chisel themselves were unaware of any disturbance until after the band's performance. The Palais is an old picture theatre and despite requests from Cold Chisel [illegible] management to remove the tables and chairs within they stayed. Tempers became frayed when bouncers tried to pull people off tables where they were dancing. The scuffles were limited to the back of the hall and to the pavement outside.

Willis expressed disgust at the attitude held by local councils and other authorities who administer town halls, civic centres and other places of potential public entertainment.

"It's getting so that Chisel can't play to under 18 gigs" he said. "We had to fight the council to get a hall for the last under 18s show we did. And the reason there was no 2SM Rockaba this year is that they couldn't get a venue. The only one they could get was the Showground, and even then they were going to be limited to 20 000 people. There just aren't adequate facilities for kids' entertainment and the authorities wonder why there are so many problems with youth these days."

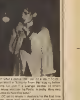
An uncontrolled youth [illegible] indeed. Let's hope the people affected both the industry and the ordinary Sydney music fan can get together and put some pressure on the relevant people to change the state of affairs.

Virgin Records, who will change distributors from Festival to CBS at the start of next year, have whacked out a Magazine Live album in the U.K. It was recorded at Melbourne's Festival Hall on their recent tour. And a [illegible]

[illegible] a TRIPLE set for C[illegible] released, [illegible] the RR office just before presstime. It's a wildly varied offering, with lots of reggae style and lots of everything else too. As the Clash only had three albums to go before their CBS contract expires, perhaps [illegible]. Contractual Obligation [illegible] already done that?

Now [illegible] of [illegible] back from the U.K [illegible] picked up two of the [illegible] Awards. You picked up Best Group Performance and Single Of The Year. Crombie [illegible] was not very verbose but did say that the new album is nearly finished and [illegible] now. [illegible] almost inescapable he [illegible] and overall image could be taking [illegible] Crombie designs [illegible] sets and even the [illegible] album cover for the band. And there was a definitely weird article in the Canadian 'Shades' magazine about the band which was all about how Tim and Neil Finn were kidnapped by two refrigerators, tied up and grilled/interviewed. When I mentioned this to Crombie he smiled and said yes Neil had done an interview tied to a cha[illegible] Got You went to No 1 in Toronto [illegible] about his [illegible] operators [illegible]?

The [illegible] in the Adelaide [illegible]

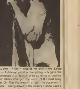


fans on DNA's [illegible] on a storming [illegible] Thebarton Town Hall [illegible] before Systems Go and The Lounge, neither of whom came anywhere near the Poets intensity. How long can Adelaide hold the band?

AC DC set to return to Australia for the first time in three years had seven of their gold records recalled recently at a press reception in London. They have offered a reward of £500 plus a complete autographed collection of the albums plus free passes for life to all their London shows to the person who returns them — and no questions asked. And it looks as if the band will be playing at the Myer Music Bowl on their return [illegible] there hasn't been a rock concert there since the last time AC/DC played there and accumulated a hearty sheaf of noise complaints. Now I just don't believe that they've got quieter.

[illegible] don't know if this one has been noised as yet but [illegible] The Clash, instead of doing a whole bunch of phone interviews with Australian media would like to phone up VENUES for half an hour and talk to real people for a change. Sounds fairly reasonable.

One the Saturday night when the Saints played Adelaide recently it happened to be singer Chris Bailey's birthday (24 he assured all and sundry). Promoters Jim and Elaine Counihan the [illegible]



happy [illegible] in the middle of the [illegible] Bailey look on [illegible] the [illegible] gave the performance of a [illegible] cheered on by a crushed crowd. Bailey changed the words of the next song Down On The Waterfront to suit the occasion. It became "Going down to the sisters." Gonna keep a [illegible] as the wedding telegram [illegible] also presented the singer with a candle-bedecked cake. "I couldn't believe it" Bailey said afterwards. "She had a lot [illegible] voice than me."

Bruce Milne of Melbourne's Au Go Go Records has come up with a weird wheeze. It's Australia's first 'cassette magazine'. It's called Fast Forward and the first issue is now on sale for $3.50. It features interviews with Rafi Edmunds, ex manager of Richard Hell, The Editions' sound engineers and a Melbourne mod Paolo Caponi as well as tracks from the Teeny Weeners, Little Murders, Pel Mel and the Informatics. If not to be found in your local groovy disc shop copies can be had from Missing Link, Box 5155AA, Melbourne.

Well on that innovative note it's goodbye from this angle. Till next year.

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CHARTS

Australian Top 20 Singles

1. SHADDAP YOU FACE
Joe Dolce
2. WOMAN IN LOVE
Barbra Streisand
3. DON'T STAND SO CLOSE
The Police
4. MASTERBLASTER
Stevie Wonder
5. ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST
Queen
6. TIME WARP
Original Cast
7. FEELS LIKE I'M IN LOVE
Kelly Marie
8. STARTING OVER
John Lennon
9. THE WANDERER
Donna Summer
10. DREAMIN'
Cliff Richard
11. [illegible] ANGRY [illegible]
[illegible]
12. TIDE IS HIGH
Blondie
13. YOU SHOOK ME
AC/DC
14. HE'S SO SHY
Pointer Sisters
15. BABOOSHKA
Kate Bush
16. CAN YOU FEEL IT
Jacksons
17. JOHNNY & MARY
Robert Palmer
18. MORE THAN I CAN SAY
Leo Sayer
19. TWO FACES HAVE I
[illegible]
20. [illegible]
[illegible]

U K Singles

1. SUPER TROUPER
Abba
2. THE TIDE IS HIGH
Blondie
3. I COULD BE SO GOOD FOR YOU
Dennis Waterman
4. BANANA REPUBLIC
Boomtown Rats
5. CELEBRATION
Kool & The Gang
6. NEVER KNEW LOVE LIKE THIS BEFORE
Stephanie Mills
7. FASHION
David Bowie
8. TO CUT A LONG STORY SHORT
Spandau Ballet
9. EMBARRASSMENT
Madness
10. WOMAN IN LOVE
Barbra Streisand
11. STARTING OVER
John Lennon/Yoko Ono
12. DO YOU FEEL MY LOVE?
Eddy Grant
13. PASSION
Rod Stewart
14. LADY
Kenny Rogers
15. I'M COMING OUT
Diana Ross
16. EARTH DIES SCREAMING / DREAM A LIE
UB40
17. I LIKE WHAT YOU'RE DOING TO ME
Young & Co.
18. DON'T WALK AWAY
Electric Light Orchestra
19. [illegible]
[illegible]
20. SPECIAL BREW
Bad Manners

U S Singles

1. MASTER BLASTER
Stevie Wonder
2. LADY
Kenny Rogers
3. THE WANDERER
Donna Summer
4. MORE THAN I CAN SAY
Leo Sayer
5. ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST
Queen
6. WOMAN IN LOVE
Barbra Streisand
7. (JUST LIKE) STARTING OVER
John Lennon
8. I'M COMING OUT
Diana Ross
9. DREAMING
Cliff Richard
10. YOU'VE LOST THAT LOVIN' FEELING
Daryl Hall & John Oates
11. HIT ME WITH YOUR BEST SHOT
Pat Benatar
12. LOVE ON THE ROCKS
Neil Diamond
13. HUNGRY HEART
Bruce Springsteen
14. GUILTY
Barbra Streisand
15. NEVER BE THE SAME
Christopher Cross
16. LOVELY ONE
The Jacksons
17. WHIP IT
Devo
18. DE DO DO DO DE DA DA DA
The Police
19. EVERY WOMAN IN THE WORLD
Air Supply
20. THE TIDE IS HIGH
Blondie

U K Albums

1. SUPER TROUPER
Abba
2. AUTOAMERICAN
Blondie
3. GUILTY
Barbra Streisand
4. FOOLISH BEHAVIOUR
Rod Stewart
5. BARRY
Barry Manilow
6. ZENYATTA MONDATTA
The Police
7. CHART EXPLOSION
Various
8. DOUBLE FANTASY
John Lennon
9. NOT THE 9 O'CLOCK NEWS
Cast
10. INSPIRATION
Elvis Presley
11. KINGS OF THE WILD FRONTIER
Adam & The Ants
12. JAZZ SINGER
Neil Diamond
13. THE RIVER
Bruce Springsteen
14. COUNTRY LEGENDS
Various
15. LITTLE MISS DYNAMITE / BRENDA LEE
Brenda Lee
16. LOONEE TUNES
Bad Manners
17. SCARY MONSTERS
David Bowie
18. THE LOVE ALBUM
Various
19. ACE OF SPADES
Motorhead
20. FLESH AND BLOOD
Roxy Music

U S Albums

1. GREATEST HITS
Kenny Rogers
2. GUILTY
Barbra Streisand
3. HOTTER THAN JULY
Stevie Wonder
4. THE RIVER
Bruce Springsteen
5. THE GAME
Queen
6. CRIMES OF PASSION
Pat Benatar
7. EAGLES LIVE
Eagles
8. THE WANDERER
Donna Summer
9. ONE STEP CLOSER
Doobie Brothers
10. FACES
Earth, Wind & Fire
11. BACK IN BLACK
AC/DC
12. ZENYATTA MONDATTA
The Police
13. TRIUMPH
The Jacksons
14. CHRISTOPHER CROSS
Christopher Cross
15. ANNE MURRAY'S GREATEST HITS
Anne Murray
16. DIANA
Diana Ross
17. GIDEON
Kenny Rogers
18. GREATEST HITS VOL. 2
Linda Ronstadt
19. THE JAZZ SINGER
Neil Diamond
20. TP
Teddy Pendergrass

Australian Top 20 Albums

1. GUILTY
Barbra Streisand
2. ZENYATTA MONDATTA
The Police
3. LIVE
The Eagles
4. [illegible]
[illegible]
5. HOTTER THAN JULY
Stevie Wonder
6. SCARY MONSTERS
David Bowie
7. DOUBLE FANTASY
John Lennon/Yoko Ono
8. BACK IN BLACK
AC/DC
9. FOOLISH BEHAVIOUR
Rod Stewart
10. HAWKS & DOVES
Neil Young
11. CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATION
Monty Python
12. GREATEST HITS
Anne Murray
13. SUPER TROUPER
Abba
14. [illegible]
[illegible]
15. PARIS
Supertramp
16. TRIUMPH
The Jacksons
17. BEST OF Vol. 2
Kenny Rogers
18. AUTOAMERICAN
Blondie
19. GIVE ME THE NIGHT
George Benson
20. EAST
Cold Chisel

3XY

1. THE TIME WARP
Original Cast
2. SHADDAP YOU FACE
Joe Dolce
3. WOMAN IN LOVE
Barbra Streisand
4. DON'T STAND SO CLOSE TO ME
Police
5. CAN YOU FEEL IT
The Jacksons
6. STATE OF THE HEART
Mondo Rock
7. FEELS LIKE I'M IN LOVE
Kelly Marie
8. ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST
Queen
9. (JUST LIKE) STARTING OVER
John Lennon
10. THE TIDE IS HIGH
Blondie

5AD

1. SHADDAP YOU FACE
Joe Dolce
2. TIME WARP
[illegible]
3. JESSE
Carly Simon
4. WOMAN IN LOVE
Barbra Streisand
5. MASTER BLASTER
Stevie Wonder
6. DON'T STAND SO CLOSE TO ME
The Police
7. (JUST LIKE) STARTING OVER
John Lennon
8. HE'S SO SHY
Pointer Sisters
9. [illegible] ANGRY [illegible]
[illegible]
10. STAR TRAX
[illegible]

2UW

1. SHADDAP YOU FACE
Joe Dolce
2. TIME WARP
Original Cast
3. WOMAN IN LOVE
Barbra Streisand
4. FEELS LIKE I'M IN LOVE
Kelly Marie
5. DUNCAN
Slim Dusty
6. ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST
Queen
7. MASTER BLASTER
Stevie Wonder
8. DON'T STAND SO CLOSE TO ME
The Police
9. THE TIDE IS HIGH
Blondie
10. KISS ON MY LIST
Hall & Oates

4BK

1. SHADDAP YOU FACE
Joe Dolce
2. MASTER BLASTER
Stevie Wonder
3. [illegible]
[illegible]
4. DON'T STAND SO CLOSE TO ME
Police
5. ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST
Queen
6. HE'S SO SHY
Pointer Sisters
7. ASHES TO ASHES
David Bowie
8. JESSE
Carly Simon
9. THE WANDERER
Donna Summer
10. STARTING OVER
John Lennon

6PM

1. SHADDAP YOU FACE
Joe Dolce
2. TIME WARP
Original Cast
3. (JUST LIKE) STARTING OVER
John Lennon
4. DON'T STAND SO CLOSE TO ME
Police
5. WOMAN IN LOVE
Barbra Streisand
6. MASTER BLASTER
Stevie Wonder
7. FEELS LIKE I'M IN LOVE
Kelly Marie
8. [illegible]
[illegible]
9. THE WANDERER
Donna Summer
10. DREAMING
Cliff Richard

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30th SYDNEY
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16th SYDNEY
17th SYDNEY
18th BRUCE STADIUM, CANBERRA

wea

Give the gift of music

Epitaph for a working class hero

by Donald Robertson

At the inquest on Paul McCartney aged 21 described as a popular singer and guitarist, P.C. Smith said in evidence that he saw one of the accused Miss Jones, standing waving bloodstained hands shouting "I got a piece of his liver."

Adrian Henri

from the poem "The New Our Times"

(included in the anthology Penguin Modern Poets 10 "The Mersey Sound")

The immortality of the Beatles was shattered by four bullets from a screwball on a New York street a few days ago. All of you reading this will know that already. The Beatles a full ten years after they went their individual ways still had the power to touch almost everybody and for a few hours the whole western world was united in its shock. The radio and TV blared the news, dailies bannered their headlines, people struggled to come to terms with what had happened, not a few shed tears. For however much they protested and demonstrated their humanity the Beatles were gods. In the mid sixties John Lennon said that the Beatles were more popular than Jesus and for a lot of people that statement made perfect sense. Every religion has its high priests and rock n roll is no exception.

As has often been said, the Beatles as a group were greater than their constituent parts. With rare Lennon or McCartney tracks the exception, the solo works of the individual Beatles in the seventies have had nowhere near the impact, inherent power or magic of the group with all the bottle. John Lennon is being mourned more I think for his being an ex-Beatle than he was being a living composer singer living in New York, a husband to Yoko, a father to Julian and Sean.

Any explanation of John Lennon's career as an artist has to take into account the myth of the Beatles and how Lennon fought to dissociate from it and assert himself, find himself as an individual. Although he suffered pain and bitterness and misunderstanding he did achieve it. And it took five years of living the life of a recluse (a "househusband" as he describes it in the excellent and comprehensive interview in Australian Playboy, Jan. '81) to do it. John Lennon died a happy man I think. The personal tragedy is that the myth got him in the shape of an obsessed fan, before he could enjoy it.

THE BEATLES

The Beatles were a four-man revolution. A music and youth revolution that with a little help from their friends, changed the face of Western culture in the sixties. The N.M.E. Book of Rock puts it fairly succinctly:

"The importance of Beatles' recorded work in the shaping of contemporary rock is incalculable and is approached in significance only by the career of Bob Dylan. By far the best songwriting team in rock, the Lennon-McCartney, supported increasingly by Harrison's ... Revolver provided basic material for a series of albums monumental in scope, imagination and technical expertise.

"Most of the basic production precepts of today came into being as innovations on particular Beatles tracks and it is extremely unlikely that rock as it is presently commercially structured will ever again offer the claustrophobic, hot-house urgency of the ten ... of boredom in which the Beatles made their most revolutionary music."

The beat as revolution is well documented. Apart from the millions of words and pictures written in the press, there are countless books on the Beatle phenomenon. Some of the most important are Hunter Davies' authorised biography *The Beatles* (recently updated to include the band's solo careers) (Granada paperback), *As Time Goes By* by Derek Taylor, which basically covers the Apple years, *The Man Who Gave The Beatles Away* by Allan Williams, one of their early managers, which covers the early Liverpool and Hamburg days and of course *Lennon Remembers — The* ... interviews by Jann Wenner, which date from the early seventies just after the first Plastic Ono Band album. There is also the Playboy interview I mentioned earlier with David Sheff.

[illegible] a detailed analysis of the Beatles' career. Everyone has their own feelings about the group and most of the facts and figures are in the books mentioned above. But I am looking to get Lennon's views on the phenomenon, and as most of the answers are centred on it, there's a wealth of opinion.

What was Beatlemania? Hunter Davies in *The Beatles*:

"Beatlemania descended on the British Isles in October 1963.

It didn't lift for three years, by which time it had covered the whole world. There was perpetual screaming and yeh-yehing from hysterical teenagers of every land and colour, few of whom could hear what was going on for the noise they were making. They were emotionally, mentally or sexually aroused. They foamed at the mouth, burst into tears, hurled themselves like lemmings in the direction of the Beatles, or just simply fainted.

"Throughout the whole of the three years it was happening somewhere in the world. Each country witnessed the same scenes of mass emotion, scenes which had never been thought possible before and which are unlikely to be repeated.

"It is impossible to exaggerate Beatlemania because Beatlemania was itself an exaggeration. For those who don't believe it, every major newspaper in the world has miles of words and pictures in its cuttings library giving blow by blow accounts of what happened when the Beatles descended on their part of the world.

"Once it had stopped, in 1967, and everyone was either overcome by exhaustion or boredom, it was difficult to believe it had all happened. Could everyone have been so mad? People of all ages and intellects eventually succumbed, although perhaps not as hysterically as the teenagers."

John maintained that that period was when the Beatles died as musicians. In the Rolling Stone 'Lennon Remembers' he said:

"We were a band who made it very very big, that's all. Our best work was never recorded."

Why?

"Because we were performers ... in Liverpool, Hamburg and other dance halls and what we generated was fantastic, where we played straight rock, and there was no-one to touch us in Britain. As soon as we made it, we made it, but the edges were knocked off. Brian put us in suits and all that and we made it very, very big. But we sold out, you know. The music was dead before we even went on the last theatre tour of Britain. We were feeling shit already because we had to reduce an hour or two hours playing to twenty minutes and we would repeat the same twenty minutes every night. We killed ourselves then to make it."

They made it, but the price was high. Hunter Davies again:

"During all the shouting and screaming and breaking of the record breaking tours in Britain and America, the Beatles were crouching somewhere inside a giant piece of machinery which was transporting them round and round the world. They disappeared inside it in 1963, forced by all the pressures, and remained there, hermetically sealed.

"Earning $1 600 or $10 000 or $100 000 for a one night stand was meaningless. Being rich and powerful and famous enough to enter any door was pointless. They were trapped."

Although they stayed together to 1969, the Beatles seemed to lose something after 1966. The last two 'Beatlemania' albums, *Revolver* and *Rubber Soul* are arguably the peak of their career. While *Sgt. Pepper* is generally considered to be their masterpiece John at the time said he refused that. "None of it is important. It just takes a few people to get going and they con themselves into thinking it's important.

"We're a con as well. We know we're conning them because we know people want to be conned. They've given us the freedom to con them. Let's stick that in there, we'll say, that'll get them puzzling."

Sergeant Pepper was a collage of nostalgia reaching back for brass bands, music hall routines and artifacts from the past. The Beatles, and particularly Lennon were really starting to analyse what they were doing. Fuelled by psychedelic drugs they dipped into Eastern religion (leaving George behind when they moved on) movies (although they'd made *A Hard Day's Night* and *Help* earlier, *Magical Mystery Tour* and *Yellow Submarine* were actually their own projects) and other projects like Apple. Their manager and guiding figure through the days of Beatlemania, Brian Epstein, died suddenly — the days of Beatlemania, and most importantly of all for John, he met Yoko Ono, an avante-garde Japanese artist.

It was in that period, 1967-68, that the ideas of John Lennon as John Lennon rather than John Lennon as John Beatle sprouted.

In his fascinating description of the pop art era in Britain, *Revolt into Style* (1970), George Melly put forward his thesis for their continuous success up to that time.

"They had from the off a formidable talent, perhaps genius, but very early on they recognised that in order to be free to exploit it, they would have to spend a great deal of their time in weaving and dodging. They knew that in the pop world the moment of total universal hysteria is the harbinger of ... ejection. Unwinding ... [illegible] ... got out. They invented their own escape route. What Brian Epstein called their 'marvellous instinct' has allowed them to recognise the precise second before the band wagon they were riding plunged into the abyss.

"The lovable mop tops became the arrogant leaders of the pop-ocracy. They in turn were absent at the funeral of Swinging London, emerging shortly afterwards as gentle, bespectacled, ... suits, drug-orientated ... just in time for Flower Power."

But after *Sgt. Pepper* they all jumped on different bandwagons. George got heavily into Eastern music, Paul got into the business side of the career with projects such as Apple, Ringo hung around getting bored and John ... well John got into Yoko and through her into the avante garde and peace politics.

Their incredible momentum kept them going until 1970 but it was a sinking ship. Many saw the split as having been caused by Yoko but John offered his personal explanation in the David Sheff/Playboy interview:

"They (the other Beatles) were as upset about the Yoko period and the fact that I was again becoming as creative and dominating as I had been in the early days, after lying fallow for a couple of years. It upset the applecart. I was awake again and they couldn't stand it."

PLAYBOY: Was it Yoko's inspiration?

LENNON: "She inspired all this creation in me."

Yoko was Lennon's escape route from the Beatles. But although the band broke up, the myth remained and it was to haunt Lennon like a shadow for the rest of his life — no matter how hard he tried to shake it.

"Let's talk about mythology, Lobey. Or let's you listen. You remember the legend of the Beatles? You remember the Beatle Ringo left his love even though she treated him tender. He was the one Beatle who did not sing, so the earliest forms of the legend go. After a hard day's night he and the rest of the Beatles were torn apart by screaming girls and he and the other Beatles returned one by one with the great rock and the great roll." I put my head in La Dire's lap. She went on: "Well that myth is a version of a much older story that is not as well known. There are no 45s or 33s from the time of this story. There are only a few written versions. In the older story Ringo was called Orpheus. He too was torn apart by screaming girls. But the details are different. He lost his love — in this case Eurydice — and she went straight to the great rock and the great roll where Orpheus had to go to get her back. He went singing, for in this version Orpheus was the greatest singer instead of the silent one. In Myths things always turn into their opposites as one version supersedes the next."

I said: "How could he get into the great rock and the great roll? That's all death and all life."

"He did."

Did he bring her back?"

No." — *from 'The Einstein Intersection' by Sam Delany (1967)*

As the Beatles he had to live with the myth that was created around them but Lennon felt it most and tried most fiercely to put it behind him. "Don't believe in Beatles," he sang on *God* from the Plastic Ono Band album. "Just believe in me/Yoko and me. And that's reality." And that album, written after a period of primal therapy, was full of similar deep soul-searching songs. It was followed by the less intense and more commercial *Imagine*, the loose rocking of *Sometime in New York City*, *Mind Games* and *Walls and Bridges* were a return to the melodicism of *Imagine* but he was about ... before the present *Double Fantasy*. *Rock'n Roll* was a craftsman's reworking of some of his favourite fifties songs. It was a superb but fitting ... Lennon had come to a creative dead end. He and Yoko at last had a child, their son Sean, and Lennon vowed to take the next five years away from the "merrygoround" as he calls it on *Watching The Wheels* from *Double Fantasy*, to be with his son.

Commenting on that line, "Don't believe in Beatles" in the Rolling Stone interview he said:

"Yeah, I don't believe in the Beatles, that's all ... there's no other way of saying it, is there? I don't believe in them whatever they were supposed to be in everyone's head, including our own heads for a while. It was a dream. I don't believe in the dream anymore."

And when the hoary old topic of a Beatles reunion was brought up in the PLAYBOY interview:

"... don't believe in yesterday ... Do we have to divide the fish and the loaves for the multitudes again? Do we have to get crucified again? Do we have to do the walking on the water again because a whole pile of dummies didn't see it the first time or didn't believe it when they saw it? No way. You can never go home. It doesn't exist."

Later in the same interview Lennon put an [illegible] perspective on it.

"With the Beatles the records are the point, not the Beatles as individuals."

And it is the music alone that has any claim to immortality. John Lennon's deeds, his great work for peace in the late sixties and seventies, his performances, in interviews and on stages, all his work is now in the past. That he left his mark on the world is without doubt. He has left the music to remember him by, but finally the dream for John, is over.

The myth of the Beatles will outlive all the Beatles. John Lennon will always be a working class hero, even if it was only 'just something to be'.

"You make your own dream. That's the Beatles story, isn't it?" — John Lennon

Melbourne

A boom decade has been followed by the beginning of what just may be a long period of depression that was Melbourne rock n roll in 1980. It would be easy to become sociological and say that the decline of the nation's "rock capital" (as numero uno AM station 3XY still call the city in their tirelessly strident promotions) is due to underlying factors that have sapped Melbourne's cultural and economic resources, but it's probably not necessary to look that far.

One major reason for the general uncertainty was symbolised by the ungraceful break-up of Skyhooks (an event which marked the end of an era as surely as the eclipse of the Easybeats or Johnny O'Keefe) and that was the disintegration of the inner-city culture that gave Melbourne its most vital 70s music. Perhaps not before time, the Carlton scene has died, the Prom Factory theatre is under threat of demolition, the writers have all moved north to Sydney and the sun, and the surviving musicians are floundering for direction.

It wasn't the happiest of years for Sports and Jo Jo Zep, the two bands who made the transition from the ghetto to the more dangerous world of multi national rock. They saw their idea ficks [illegible] ripped off by the upstarts from down the coast, Australian Crawl, and their new albums received plenty of indifference from critics and punters.

Live, both of them are probably playing better than ever, but the diffidence that they've always displayed when deciding which pop fashion to wear this month doesn't compare favourably to the [illegible] of the well-organised monsters from north of the border who throughout the year consumed more than their share of Melbourne audiences' pocket money.

Further down the inner city pecking order, the same uncertainty has prevailed. Paul Kelly may still be the country's finest classic songwriter, but his progress has been crippled by mediocre vinyl and line-up changes in the once magic Front Dots. Eric Gradman has taken the easy way out by going into hiding and letting Man And Machine fall into the same annoying might-have-been deterioration that was the Bleeding Hearts' fate, though his recent forays into the studio might once again quell the building enigma back into the cult status he seems loath to escape from.

There's been a similar malaise apparent on the other side of Melbourne rock: the underground has stubbornly refused to come up with anything exciting. The Boys Next Door/Birthday Party's [illegible] has left a gaping hole in Melbourne rock — none of the pallid imitators they've spawned has produced anything which has the tensive adventurous rock'n'roll quality which the BND exuded every time they shambled onto even the most godforsaken stage. Enjoy their last, buy their new album towards the end of their English sojourn they were making shots in [illegible] as that country's musical consciousness, despite reports to the contrary. So don't expect them to hang about too long in Birmingham on the Yarra.

The other band with the persistence to make something of their '77 origins, Models have managed to pull off an idiosyncratic uncompromising debut album and have proved that the wasteland of Melbourne mainstream rock can be penetrated without too much selling out. Time will tell if national acceptance or the fate of the Reels awaits them. Early in 1980 it looked for a moment as if a new movement in Melbourne beat music was developing, uncertainly underground, but the passion has proved a mirage.

Most maudit of the horde of young bands who stormed the stages of such venues as the much lamented Champion were the Fabulous Marching Girls, who for a while looked like achieving a [illegible] rock fusion with the nirvana qualities of primitives Ramones or the Undertones. Industry indifference and their own stubbornness led them to a premature death, but their Au Go Go single is available if you want to invest in a future collector's item.

Of the others (excluding the effervescently pretentious Jet [illegible]) it's sufficient to say their persistence didn't equal their talent, but it's understandable that Melbourne bands feel frustrated when they see mediocre Sydney female acts being signed and [illegible] while local overdriveness withers on the vine. Likely because there's so little major label activity in the city. Mushroom [illegible] as aimless as ever, with Michael Gudinski reaching the high [illegible] of his career with the inroads made overseas by Split Enz, but even though Gudinski is pushing a dozen less acts as slender [illegible] and the country's finest street talent, Missing Link goes from strength to strength: the combined efforts can only handle a fraction of the available Melbourne talent.

Out of the mainstream there are still signs of life: the Phil Kelly/David Chesworth school of evanescent quirky Anglo-synthesiser music continues to release product that's inventive and [illegible], and a slightly intriguing phenomenon has been the persistence of guitar bands like Japanese Comix, Reggae La Coo, Lovers, Kevins, Checks (who may just be the most grinning [illegible] self-effaced modern pop outfit in the city), major labels take note! Popgun Men and Wrecked Jets, all of which have at their core connection with the glory days of the 70s. Their styles range from the Kevins' ramshackle soul-pop to the Wrecked Jets' [illegible] overdriveness, but all of them place priority on the melodic song that's a major part of the Melbourne tradition. Serious Young [illegible] are another guitar outfit who have nothing to do with the remaining cliques [illegible] their influences are both most contemporary and more art rock archaic [illegible] but they play superbly and have enough quirkiness to be more than promising.

And Melbourne is still the city where you can find most genres of music being played with more expertise than anywhere else — dance music whether it be the Cracka[illegible] rockabilly, Fabulaires party r'n'b, Little Murders and Bleu Scooters' mod pastiches, and Lucky Dog's superb reggae, is still available most nights of the week, which is a small but not insignificant mercy, even if this writer feels less and less inclined to party to basically insubstantial sounds. And for a summation, here's a list of twenty-plus Melbourne songs you should have listened to during the year:

The Dots, *Hard Knocks*; **The Birthday Party**, *Happy Birthday*; **Mark Gillespie**, *Small Mercies*; **Jo Jo Zep**, *Hand Me Down*; **Primitive Calculators**, *Do That Dance*; **Models**, *Uncontrollable Way*; **Cuban Heels**, *Fast Living Friend*; **Japanese Comix**, *Nippon Magic*; **Sports**, *Blue Hearts*; **Russell Morris and the Rubes**, *Heat of the Night*; **Lovers**, *You Know She Won't Call*; **Clint Small**, *On The Fourth Floor*; **Little Murders**, *High School*; **Marching Girls**, *True Love*; **Australian Crawl**, *Downhearted*; **Popgun Men**, *Modern Man*; **Wrecked Jets**, *Howling Life*; **Aliens**, *Follow That Girl*; **James Freud**, *Modern Girl*; **Crackajacks**, *Long Blonde Hair*; **Blonde Rock**, *State Of The Heart*; **Anne Cosma**, *Cleopatra*; **Foal Insek**, *Dancing With The Boys*; **Little Heroes**, *She Says*; **John Drysdale**, *My Face* (unreleased); **Leftovers**, *Killing Time*.

[illegible] which shows that there was a rewarding piece of Melbourne vinyl released every two weeks in 1980. Perhaps things aren't so bad after all, behind the boredom there's still an impulse at work, even if it's mainly concerned with working over the past. Maybe if a few facts are faced, the 80s needn't be so [illegible] after all.

— ADRIAN RYAN

Sydney

1980 in Sydney. The beginning of a new decade and all that stuff. But this year was really little more than a year of venues closing down, bands [illegible] recording contracts with major companies, the emergence of several independent labels and a depressing amount of unfulfilled potential in the music scene. O.K., so the local industry has never flourished better than it did this year, but there's just so much still missing. Quantity never was a substitute for quality.

Sydney has built a reputation over the last few years, through its many venues, of providing the most active music scene in the country. But the closure of numerous city gigs has almost sounded the death knell for dear old harbour city. 1980 saw the demolition of the infamous Bondi Lifesaver, one of the most productive night spots of the last five or so years. It will reopen (perhaps) next year as part of a Coles shopping complex! The Stagedoor Tavern also disappeared from sight due to constant police and legal harassment. Which brings to mind that furore over festive [illegible] licensing and the demonstration by muzos which resulted in a repeal of the law and the saving of live music in Sydney. Other venues who've sadly (and not so sadly!!) departed are The Heritage which was unfortunately forced to shut its doors because of an aggro crowd of violent leatherjackets which frequented there, Selina's which closed for renovations and has not yet reopened, and the old fleas-pit Chequers (aka Regal) which, although always overcrowded and unsafe, still performed a necessary service for the inner Sydney. One noble attempt to provide music (and seating too if you so desired) was the ill-fated The Betsy of North Sydney. Such a shame considering it's now a cabaret club featuring the likes of Marcia Hines. The management's major problem was that they put on the wrong acts. Let's face it, if someone with a bit of foresight opened up a similar venue and hired some good strong acts, they'd clean up the field. Everyone likes to dance, I suppose, but there are times when you'd rather sit and watch, and only the Capitol or the Hordern are available for that.

Independent record labels really began to make their presence felt in Sydney during 1980. A carry-over from the year before, The Thought Criminals' Doublethink Records was probably the most productive, releasing premiere efforts from Popular Mechanics, The Singles, Sekret Sekret, Tactics and The Systematics. Most of these merely pointed out that few of the bands were really ready to seriously record, particularly in the case of the amateurish productions of Sekret Sekret and The Singles. Phantom Records on the other hand, the house label of the import record store of the same name, released material of a consistently high quality, particularly The Sheiks' posthumous single *Face With No Name* and Flaming Hands' debut. Regular Records signed up their first non-mainstream band in Flowers and an ensuing highly charting album could well push them into the big league. With the splintering of the original Doublethink label offshoots like Mr and Red[illegible] Records have come to the fore and stand poised to make some degree of impact next year.

Sydney bands displayed an overwhelming tendency to record during 1980, more so than ever before. Any new act that had played the cursory few gigs was being approached to record long before they ever should have. The Moving Parts showed amazing foresight and professionalism by not going into [illegible] gigs for a while to re-emerge with a stunning self financed and self-produced debut E.P. *How Could I?* which, courtesy of radio, generated considerable interest in the band before they returned to live performances. A refreshing use of strategy for old Sydney Town. On the strength of that and subsequent performances they were approached by Festival Records with their own subsidiary label Alternative producing the great follow-up E.P. *Lazy China Doll*. Up and comers The Magnetics, featuring ex Dragon guitarist Robert Taylor and ex Wasted Daze's Terry Wilson, have proudly chosen to pursue live work until they feel they're ready to record, rejecting the "immediacy" plaguing other Sydney bands.

The local live circuit saw the spawning of countless new bands throughout 1980. The Eyes, JMM (aka Scapa Flow), Jump Vision, The Singles, Proteens, The Church, Flaming Hands are just a few of somewhat varying ability who frequented inner city venues. The Mod revival produced several people "jumping on someone else's [illegible]" and menial bands such as Aboriginal Aboriginal reminded us how unresponsive some members of the public are to change and experimentation.

Although we're of the opinion that too much of Sydney's rock and roll is of inferior quality there are some bands who through their performances and recordings in 1980 have convinced us that there still remains some spark of originality and potential in the product stale. Laughing Clowns displayed a refreshing desire to experiment but probably need a little more refinement to achieve their aims. Likewise Tactics. Flaming Hands have proven that any band with Julie Mostyn up front have got to warrant some interest [illegible] the best female voice in the country. Despite their little disappearance for a while, Popular Mechanics, The Darlinghurst Darlings should also be able to better their present form. The Magnetics' gigs throughout the year hint that there two old rogues have still a lot to offer, and ditto to Brave New Works [illegible] a product of the split up of both The Sheiks and The Works. But Moving Parts have got to be the most promising of all Sydney bands as they concentrate most on a lean pop oriented sound.

A disturbing trend that became more apparent this year was the heightening disparity between Sydney city music and that of the suburbs, particularly the infamous west. Although the venues in the west are generally far superior in terms of size and facilities, there has emerged a marked difference in the kind of bands playing in these areas compared to the more contemporary urban groups. For example Kevin Borich, Dallimore and Rose Tattoo to name three are always found playing Blacktown's Comb and Cutter Hotel or The Sundowner but rarely if ever at the inner city venues. Such a separation, whether encouraged by promoters or by crowd tastes, can only be destructive.

1980 was also a mixed year in terms of international touring acts. Sydney was fortunate enough to see Magazine, B52s, Tom Petty and The Heartbreakers and Roy Orbison, who all provided superlative (sometimes surprisingly so) performances. The Cure's gigs around the pub scene were also noteworthy. On the other hand The Boomtown Rats and The Police put in disappointing and disillusioning concerts, and the list of stand and unmoving tourists is too long to bother mentioning. When are all the good ones coming?

So 1980 was not, in our opinion, one of the best the lab city's seen, though most in the industry would have you believing otherwise. The new bands appeared but disappeared. And out of the new "old guard" of local bands only The Angels and Midnight Oil have managed to uphold to some degree the reputation, whatever that was, of Sydney rock. Let's hope 1981 flushes a few of the impurities out of Australian music with a return to quality in Sydney's "modern" scene.

— GOOSE & PAUL KOPF

Adelaide

By the time you read this it will already be out of date. At least one of the bands mentioned will have broken up. At least one proposed project (e.g. a record) will have been postponed or discarded entirely. Adelaide rock n'roll's like that. Things change pretty fast, but it still doesn't bloody get anywhere.

1980 saw the rise and rise of FM radio in Adelaide. The two rock stations, 5MMM and 5SSA, made their presence felt. Unfortunately neither has provided a true alternative to the endless stream of valium music pouring out of the a.m. dinosaurs. 5MMM is staffed largely by volunteers, many of whom do not have a very professional attitude. Some have trouble playing records at the correct speed.

Triple M promised listeners an emphasis on "progressive" music. Somehow their good intentions have alienated many people not directly involved in the running of the station. Their definition of "progressive" is rather less broad than one would have hoped.

5SSA plays album-oriented elevator music for the most part, although their format is changing a little for the better in recent weeks. The practice of broadcasting concerts by overseas artists not visiting Adelaide (lately a commonplace phenomenon) is a step in the right direction. 5UV [illegible] are playing excellent rock to the few who care to listen.

Live music remains the only real vehicle for Adelaide rock n'roll. A severe slump in venues and general conditions which began in mid 1979 has not abated, however. With the exception of a few isolated highlights, stuff all has happened this year to restore my former belief in Adelaide as a musically and culturally thriving place. Some people insist that it still is. Not likely. How do you account for the present state government? How do you explain a swing to Labor in the states but South Australia in the Federal Election? Adelaide sits in the grip of blue-rinse paranoia. A huge conservative backlash is on and, like it or not, affects people's cultural attitudes. The greater mass of young people in Adelaide wouldn't go near a rock venue. With some of the music available I'm not surprised.

Legions of godawful heavy metal bands with names like Kat[illegible], Bold and Rapturise Dusk (I kid you not!) are holding well-defended fortresses in lounge bars from Norwood to Newton. These people are prime candidates for euthanasia. At very least they should have their flying vees confiscated.

Similarly, other venues with promise are filled to the gills with gutless cabaret bands playing "acceptable face" music. They are musical mercenaries who probably spend hours in their bedrooms learning the bass line to *Crazy Little Thing Called Love* and *What I Like About You*. The Dukes, Nightwatch, Session, Studio [illegible] and so on. Slightly different but no less chunderous are the Boys (Adelaide version) who play stale versions of Everybody's [illegible] tunes. They wear sleeveless jackets, leather pants and like to look like they ought to be shot at sunrise. Does anyone remember [illegible] Mission? Of course not. Unlike the Boys, the Moderns had style and sincerity. The Boys are basically a sixties version of an Elvis Presley impersonator. They're also the highest grossing band working locally at present, with the possible exception of Swanson Rob[illegible] Breaking Point. The less said about them the better. I'm getting angry!

At the other end of the spectrum is the Adelaide "New Music" Explosion. Nuvo Bloc, Systems Go, Lounge, Desperate Measures etc. have certainly broken new ground [illegible] since their rise to local prominence, but how much of their success is self perpetuated? They seem to feature on 5MMM and at that station's live music venues far more frequently than any other local acts. Two of the groups in question have members who hold influential positions at 5MMM. If enthusiasm for this music is being generated in this fashion at the expense of the rest, it stinks. As for the "unknown", most of the new music bands only seem to perform once a month on average, and usually at Triple M related functions.

As usual, some great Adelaide bands didn't see the year out. The first casualties were Lemmy Caution, who fizzled into oblivion after numerous line-up changes. They've since reformed in Sydney. The Blades lost a drummer and vocalist and sank without trace. They played brilliant covers by the likes of the Flys, counterbalanced with devastating originals fuelled by Jeremy B[illegible]'s body slamming chords and Manus O'Leary's laconic vocal delivery. The Young [illegible] disbanded after being studiously ignored by local punters, ironically playing a farewell gig to a packed house at the Tivoli. Andy, Keith and Mick [illegible] are now regrouping in Melbourne. Can you see a pattern developing here?

Not all is lost. No False Address are finally starting to achieve what they'd always threatened to. Of course they had to leave Adelaide to do so, but at least now they appear to be going places on the grounds of their musical merit, not simply because they're black. The Dagoes reformed and recorded one of the best local singles of all time. They can't always be [illegible] onstage, but they're still more fun than a barrel of mutants. The Bodgies [illegible] usually slay Adelaide crowds (no mean feat, I assure you) with no bullshit blues and r'n'b, and no bass player! The Bad Poets play some of the most enthralling music heard in these parts for a long time. Get them on record immediately!

Many new records are at various stages of planning or completion. Triple M are shortly releasing an Adelaide compilation. Hopefully it will be more representative than some of their previous amateur [illegible] efforts. If nothing else it will document bands who may not exist in six months time. Nuvo Bloc have just released their debut single *Atomic Fiction*. The ex-members of the U-Bombs have resurrected and cleaned up five tracks recorded in August 1979, and will be releasing a 12" EP on the recently formed Brainbuster label. A single from the Units, also on Brainbuster, is imminent.

Hot tips for 1981 are few and far between. Adelaide bands are notorious for [illegible] up in November and December. Maybe they're all surfies. Serious contenders for 1981 success are Safari Set, if only by virtue of having Ray Dyer's managerial muscle behind them. They play ideal [illegible] music, but could be a hell of a lot more exciting if they didn't look so diligent onstage. The only competition at this stage are the Units, who have been wallowing in obscurity (Buck knows why). They are currently negotiating a string of Melbourne gigs in January. The Lounge will also be testing the Melbourne water early next year. Look out for a new band formed from the remains of the Blades. They'll be hot.

This piece has doubtless offended some people. No apologies are in order. Anyone who sets themselves up as a self-appointed arbiter of public taste must be able to ride with the punches. Artistic fascism is a disturbing new element in rock, and Adelaide is full of it.

Somebody do something!

— DOCTOR [illegible]

Perth

If 1979 saw the resurgence of melody in Perth, then 1980 was responsible for the reaction against it — both by the fashion conscious pop kids and also by the original hard-core punks, skinheads and reprehensible National Fronts, the band most followed by the former group being the Manikins and the latter the various mutations of the band that was Enemy Sounds.

Violence came to the fore in Perth in 1980 — every gig by Enemy Sounds ends in senseless violence which has caused them to be banned in almost every venue in the city. As I see it, the violence is due to several factors — media representation (by such worthless social scene magazines as Blaze, G.A.T. and the once dependable Lure) and the subsequent rash of "punk/pop" nights at burnt out nightclubs as Hannibals, the Underground and Studio 7. The absence of established rock bands in the middle of the year — first the Rockets, then the Scientists, the Triffids and the Manikins — all had long [illegible] off the [illegible]. All these factors, plus the introduction of the National Front have been responsible for ridiculous scenes at the Birds, the Cure, Wreckless Eric and the [illegible] gigs, marring a year of otherwise exciting music.

So what happened to the promising bands of last year? Well, the Rockets made a good [illegible] where both the Manikins and the Scientists disappointed [illegible] but lost [illegible] in the process. The Scientists lost (or rather eliminated) Ben Juniper and couldn't find a replacement with the suitable combination of energy, ability and musical preference — they are now a three-piece. The Triffids suffered a dry spell in line-up change and came back stronger than ever. Their two tapes are the most intriguing pieces of music in Australia — songs in the nature of Television, early Talking Heads and Modern Lovers about old age homes, lost innocence and greasy hamburgers, states of mind — great stuff. Less appealing were the Teeny Weenies, who in the course of a year built up a following of the pop kids and hairdressers before leaving for Sydney. And out of the ashes of the orange people's punk put-down play Punk Messiah came Ground Zero who put out a single on Mark Mark Mark from White Rider's label (shockingly produced but brilliant — in the minimalist nature of the Young [illegible] from Canberra).

Other new bands included the Rhythm Method (clever and fun), the Plants (pretentious new noise, good at times), the Helicopters (too great), the New [illegible] (obscure tunes and lyrics) and countless other unnamed like No Addresses, Vacant Lot, Screaming Fits, Film, Act It Up, X-hurts, Nobodies, Antibodies, Accident, the Pram — not even I saw all of them.

Perhaps the year belonged to the three bands who made it big over east — the Stockings, Boys [illegible] the Dugites — the latter who lived up to their slogan "see us before we're ruined by fame and fortune" — it couldn't have happened to a nicer girl. The Scientists, who also appeared on Countdown, suffered from internal trouble and went with a sizzling farewell at the Metro, hardly lived up to their reputation as the best band in W.A.

New venues came and went — Adrians, the Rat, the Metro, Victoria Hall — and initially relieved the pressure on Hernandes, Stares and Broadway. However lack of support (too much too soon) closed all but Adrians. Perth's only Punks, Audio Carnage and their fans, may have contributed to this also — if only they could lose some of their scummy arsehole following, but with the current media "punk promotion" and the influx of mindless pommies this is unlikely. It's all too late for the people with split skulls and boot bruises and it's pathetic watching the guys that cause them having a "good time" — in 1980 it's a little too contrived, jaded and decadent to be believable. Meanwhile, the real enemy stands safe.

Speaking of the media, W.A. got two new FM stations this year — an ABC classical station and 96FM — with an easygoing format (boring) and old has-been jockeys. It concentrates on Billy Joel, Linda Ronstadt, Sky, George Benson, Manhattan Transfer, Fleetwood Mac, Jackson Browne and other tuned out Westcoasters. A real insult to the commercial stations! Even more disappointing was the University station 6UVS going the way of mass appeal with full time announcers and top 40 programs. From being an alternative radio station to being a station following the commercial stations' lead rather than setting its own standards. The only radio station in Perth that is listenable is 6NR on week nights between 8.30pm and 12 midnight. In particular are One For The Money and Shake Some Action on Tuesdays and Wednesdays — the only source of contemporary new wave in Perth. Shake Some Action has been going for three years now and has remained relevant — though sadly missing Mark Demetrius as co-compere.

In all, a year that leaves a bitter taste in the mouth, hoping for better in 1981.

— C.C. Mitchell

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the Birthday Party

If the Birthday Party had spent nine months in Alice Springs would they have received the attention on their return as was evident in the Crystal Ballroom on Sat 22nd? Would car loads of South Australians have seen fit to travel 1000 miles for their return to Melbourne?

It was inevitable The Birthday Party could've played garbage and brought the roof down. Hordes of people lined Fitzroy St. to eventually be packed into the Ballroom. Even the Full House sign appeared. Seeing The Birthday Party for the first time for me was rewarding. Nearly two weeks later I spoke to guitarist Rowland Howard long distance.

How did you feel about the Crystal Ballroom gig?

R: I was pretty apprehensive. I didn't know what to expect.

What you got was fanatical response to a brilliant set.

R: It was very funny. It seemed to get out of hand a lot. The crowd liked us so much or something. When Nick walked on stage, hysterical cheers, something that's never happened before. Or not before we went overseas.

It does seem that in their absence they have won a stronger following in Australia. I suggest to Roland that people appear to respect the music more intensely now.

R: That's actually quite true. Like previously, well especially in Sydney, people did treat us like drunken fools.

You've been back to Sydney now. How was it this time?

R: Great, really good. We are treated more respectably which is much better. We played at the Paris Theatre with the Laughing Clowns. I think they are wonderful.

Do the band as a whole enjoy playing live?

R: Yes, I think live work performances are very important. A group should be able to put that across. Exciting and dynamic without going in any theatrics like smoke bombs.

On stage the band look confident moving through songs with minimum fuss. Nick's now making interesting sounds on sax which adds even more textures to the multi-textured band.

As we know The Birthday Party were in London, no Alice Springs. The difficult first months were made less so by all members' inherent right in gainful employment. We discussed how they managed from a (money) survival point of view.

R: Tracy, Phill and Nick both worked in steady jobs while the rest of us worked in odd various jobs like factory work occasionally.

Were you squatting at any time?

R: Nick was.

Few gigs were played. Not by choice it seems. English bands don't go in for heavy live gigging. Fortunately for The Birthday Party John Peel saw them at the Rock Garden (that's first gig) and proceeded to record and play them on his radio show. Later he played *Friend Catcher* religiously which led to an acceleration of interest and prior to leaving England *Friend Catcher* was sitting at No. 3 on the alternative charts.

Generally speaking, were you personally inspired by England and the band there?

R: No. London was a drag.

You're going back to England again though.

R: Yes, last week in February.

What interests me is what will be happening for the band while in Australia.

R: I believe we will be touring Brisbane then recording at Armstrong studios, Melbourne. Some more gigging in Melbourne. Then Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne, leaving for London in February.

Will they be all new songs on the album?

R: Yes, about 12 songs. It depends on how long they are. We have about half of them written and half we have to write in the studio.

What songs?

R: *Nick The Stripper, Yard, Cry, King Ink and Figure of Fun* ... the last four were recorded for John Peel in London. I've heard the songs on a tape done in England. To me they are interesting and inspiring.

Are you taking the new album back to London with you?

R: If we are happy with the recording. Probably we'll be releasing it in America.

Have you ever released anything there?

R: No, well actually The Birthday Party album was originally going to be released in America on Ralph. At the time they had no money. It was never intended to come out in Australia.

Are you pleased to be back in Australia?

R: Yes we are.

For those of you who haven't yet seen this great band take the pleasure.

— **FRANKIE**

(Legal advise: John Deal)

UNITS

In an environment where so much of a band's drawing power is directly attributable to media approval, The Units have learnt a lot about self determination. In 11 months of regular gigs in their present form they have fought a drawn out battle against general indifference ... one which they are now on the verge of winning off their own backs.

Bassist Lucky Stiff qualifies: "Adelaide's a bit of a culture backwater because it constantly produces brilliant bands who generally break up after playing 12 months to half empty houses. If say the Sports had started in Adelaide they never would have got anywhere."

The band as a whole is acutely aware of what's involved in the process of travelling under their own steam, integrity intact. And they approach this with a fierce positivism. Singer-Guitarist Al Sheen: "You've got to play in a way that says 'This is Us'." And they do.

The Units are the only band in Adelaide capable of producing that ominous rumble that's essential to great rock'n'roll. They play with a [illegible] super quickness which combines with [illegible] extraordinary vocals to produce their own compelling high energy music.

The playlist is made up largely of original material. This material is diverse and unusual.

I try to establish the source of the styles, but it's a difficult business. Nailing it down to anything simple and economical is as mercenary a business. We discuss some English bands over the last four years. But then earlier in the afternoon my conversation with Lucky Stiff had wandered onto the subject of Johnny Burnette and other southern rockabilly speed freaks. (The Units' version of *Lonesome Train* although not for purists will knock down tall buildings from some distance.)

We settle for discussing content. The band make political emotional music yet punctuate this with some quite light hearted songs.

Al: "A song like *On The Outer* (a pointed poke at those in control) covers one aspect, the odd thing in with the musical establishment, whilst *Listen, Let's Make Love* is just taking the mickey out of something. Which happens to be French B-movies on late night TV.

I was sleeping in Moulin Rouge
And the gendarme came up and said
Hey you! Move!
I offered him Chablis and Chateau brand
But that young hothead just spat on my hand

"Some other songs like *Nobody Likes My Kind* and *Ignorance is Bliss* are commenting on our own experiences. Some of these are fairly negative reactions, we're reacting to things we don't like. These things have to affect you."

Two songs in that category *You're So Strange* and *Guess I'm Going*, penned by a friend of the band Ken Sykes, are out and out classics that would send The Romantics scurrying for the nearest garbage chute.

The Units are in the process of releasing a single on their own Brainbuster label entitled *Baby You Flirt* (Sykes) which is very much a commercial pop song. This is backed by *Drill Room*, a stronger and more representative song. The words of the chorus give a better picture of the live feel and directness.

There's only one thing I want to do,
to give my life to a fucker like you.

As well as the aforementioned Sheen & Stiff The Units comprise guitarist Cloudy Dee, previously of Sydney band Lynx Rowe and Backstreet, and drummer Vince [illegible]. Vince's secret ambition is to acquire every used car yard on South Road. Lucky Stiff has been a member of the U Bombs and also Smokestack Lightning, from whence came the original Melbourne band Sweet Angel.

The Units on stage seem a lot like an [illegible] with three dynamic members who are, well ... (put it this way, they've been known to bill themselves as the world's shortest band). This is effectively contrasted by somewhat taller Cloudy Dee who doesn't move a muscle all night (arms excluded).

But jokes aside, The Units play with consummate skill, and lively and convincing stage presence. There's a lot of skilful projection of feelings expressed in the songs.

Sheen: "We're putting on a show, but the show you do has to say what you want to say."

He cites Elvis Costello as one who uses stage gimmicks effectively — saying precisely what he means to.

Stiff: "We want to have fun and the audience to have fun and any lyrical barbs in there, well that's just what we are."

I mutter something about being angry and still able to smile.

Stiff: "Yeah. I bet people still enjoy themselves at Jam gigs."

Units gigs are well timed and powerful. Songs run headlong into one another with only a beat or two between them.

General ambitions?

Stiff: "We want to go to America and play across [illegible] City."

A poignant idea. The Units aren't compromising.

After heading to Melbourne to play the Exford Hotel on December 12 and the Crystal Ballroom a week later the band are looking at doing themselves there permanently as of January. They're expecting a good reception ... assuming we play well and that the audiences treat us honestly.

Vince: "It'll give us a chance to do something we can't do here — we can play six nights a week if we want to."

Al: "Yes, more competition. It'll have to make us better."

Lucky: "We're not going to Melbourne to make a fortune but to play and get better. We won't make the mistakes other bands have by looking for instant success, and then breaking up."

Simply, the Units are a band who've been overlooked, for the flimsiest of reasons, by far too many people. If you happen to be someone with trendy preconceived prejudices, leave them home when you go to see The Units. Which you will you will you will.

— **JOHN DOE**

JOHN BOB RAY JEREMY ANTHONY REG RICHARD JENNY DENISE GAY

MARTIN JOHN KEITH IVA PETER ROZZ CHRIS NICK JOHN DOC STEVE IAN RON JIMMY

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HOW CAN A SMALL TOWN BIG SHOT BOY GET ENOUGH TO EAT?

Stuart Coupe goes searching for a young soul rebel and gets the last interview with the original Dexy's Midnight Runners.

Wednesday afternoon. Telephone rings. It's someone from EMI. Yes I did get through to Kevin Rowland from Dexy's Midnight Runners the night before. Yes the interview did go well.

"Did he happen to say anything about the band breaking up?" asks the EMI person casually.

Turns out that in England there were rumours that Dexy's were about to split but the band had refused to discuss the matter with their record company. And as they won't talk to the English press the only hope was that Rowland would have mentioned something to yours truly during the course of their only Australian interview.

Sorry but he didn't. He talked about everything else under the sun mind you but nothing about getting rid of about half of the band.

Cut to New Musical Express a few weeks later. November 15th to be exact. A Page 3 news item reads in part: "Dexy's Midnight Runners have not, contrary to reports elsewhere, broken up ... but they have been split down the middle with more than half of the line-up walking out.

The four defectors are drummer Andy 'Stoker' Growcott, bassist Pete Williams and saxophonists Jeff Blythe (tenor) and Steve Spooner (alto) who left following disagreements over future plans. These four are likely to stay together as the nucleus of a new band.

"The Dexy's name however is to remain the property of [illegible]

Cut to a Tuesday night in Sydney. I scamper back to a friend's home in the middle of a dinner party and dial Birmingham (21) 6432661 where I'm assured Rowland is waiting for the call. Why has he agreed to do an interview? The British press have given him and the band a rough time painting Rowland as an arrogant little creep but it seems curiosity has got the better of him. He wants to know about Australia and is surprised to hear that Geno is hovering around the lower parts of Top 40 charts over here.

He speaks quickly, strongly and clearly. Says he's happy to talk about anything, even go over the band's background. Dexy's had just finished a tour of Europe with concerts in places like Germany and Sweden. "It was more pleasant than our last English tour" Rowland said. "We were playing to halls that held between 200 and 400 people and it was the first time they'd seen us so there was a real pioneer spirit about it."

The LP has only been out over there for two weeks and already it's sold over 10,000 copies.

What about sales in England? "The album's done 85,000 copies so far, *Geno* sold 500,000 copies and *There There My Dear* did 250,000."

Dexy's are obviously extra inspired by soul music of yesteryear and in the few interviews they've done they've talked a lot about recordings on the Stax, Atlantic and Motown labels, along with British soul artists like Georgie Fame, Cliff Bennett, Zoot Money and Geno Washington. Dexy's pay tribute to their inspirations by covering their songs in concerts. "We do a few each night" Rowland said. "We change them around so that we enjoy them. They show where our roots are.

"We're not ashamed of the fact that I think we're pretty dreams in our choice of covers. We usually do *One Respect*, [illegible] Cliff Bennett's *One Way Love* and Sam and Dave's *Hold On, I'm Coming* and a few others."

What about James Brown's *Sex Machine* [illegible]

[illegible]

from that of the ska/bluebeat bands like Madness and Specials. The two have been grouped together largely because they appeared at roughly the same time and early in the piece Dexy's toured with Madness. I wondered if Dexy's felt some bond with the ska bands. "There's no particular common spirit. It was just that 2 Tone offered us a tour. We've got nothing against the other bands but like with us there's been a stack of imitators like The Beat, Selecter, Bad Manners and UB40. They've all just jumped on the bandwagon."

Phewwww. And after that there's a question about Dexy's political perspectives. "We're all politically aware" Rowland said. "And I guess we lean towards the left but we don't want to make a career out of politics. Everyone is supposed to be communist, anti Thatcher and anti nuclear ... the press try to understand classes but it goes over the heads of the kids.

"In 1980 the most important thing is personal politics and the politics of everyday things like buying a packet of cigarettes and a cup of tea. There's loads of social pain at the moment — it really isn't good in England."

This leads to a question about the album's last track *There There My Dear* and whether it was an attack on intellectuals who try and explain everything by quoting Cabaret, Berlin, Burroughs, J G Ballard, Duchamp, Beauvoir, Kerouac, Kierkegaard, Michael Rennie".

"*There There, My Dear* is more a reaction to the dilettante approach of people like Howard Devoto and Green Politi who say they care about serious causes but know that they can still go back to their rich backgrounds. We don't make a big thing about coming from working class backgrounds ... middle class kid."

In past interviews Rowland has said that Geno Washington was "the greatest soul singer in the world". He was also the first live act Rowland saw, aged 11. The success of *Geno*, the song, was sufficient to drag The Man out of retirement and back onto the stage — much to Rowland's annoyance and disappointment. "There was a big Geno Washington revival and he came over with his group," Rowland said. "They were disgusting. I never thought it would happen ... saw the group and they were really terrible ... just like a heavy metal band. Like Geno was the first person I ever saw and then he was simply amazing."

Turns out for what it's worth, Rowland also saw James Brown play at the Albert Hall in 1970.

He starts talking about [illegible] wanted to form a group [illegible]

[illegible]

Atlantic stuff."

What about Dexy's appearance with those silly looking hats? "People are confused by us" Rowland said. "The clothes and the caps are an attempt at getting that *On The Waterfront*-Brando look. The woolly hats are the American/Italiane look.

"We're really into the image. We think it's a good way to express ourselves and we actually sat down and thought about it. It's the hot and sweaty look."

Does this have anything to do with a line on the back cover of the band's album 'P.S. Old clothes do not make a tortured artist'?

Rowland continues: "People also get confused by the music. *Geno* was so commercial that people related to it on a pop level and a lot of people who'd only heard *Geno* were pretty surprised when they came and saw us play live."

Next a query about the lyrics of *Burn It Down* which mentions Irish writers like Oscar Wilde, Brendan Behan, Sean O'Casey, George Bernard Shaw, Samuel Beckett, Eugene O'Neill, Edna O'Brien, etc, etc. "It's written from a disgust at ethnic jokes," Rowland said. "It's a tirade against people who make those sort of jokes.

"In Britain people actually believe that Irish people are stupid. All the writers mentioned in the song are Irish and what I'm saying is if all the Irish are stupid then what about all these writers."

Next up Birmingham, the Dexy's home city. "Birmingham is a big industrial city" Rowland said. "It's the second biggest city in England and it's a real heavy metal city. We don't go down particularly well, and I'm not proud of coming from Birmingham.

"The Beat and UB40 make a big deal of coming from Birmingham but that's their thing."

As for London: "There's more trendy. Things happen so quickly."

As yet there's no Dexy's material released in the States. "They wanted to release the album in October but it seemed a waste of time to me. We've only been to New York once. We're a very English group. It looks like the album will come out there in January and we'll go in February."

Talk turns to relations with EMI. "We got into big troubles with the business" Rowland said. "We always got an understanding with EMI. We do our own art work, covers and ads. We only [illegible] much involvement from EMI. It's been a bit of a struggle but we're said to keep it that way."

Rowland [illegible] the cover shot of *Searching For The Young Soul Rebels* was taken in [illegible]

[illegible]

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Few people even David Byrne himself could have predicted that the new Talking Heads album would be a radical departure from the previous three. Sure each album marked a progression in the band's music, the last two being enriched by Eno's production and as such Talking Heads have avoided repetition of any sort, something few bands can lay claim to.

But *Remain in Light* has done far more than avoid repetition as it has swung the band onto an entirely different emphasis but one which when you accept and understand it presents the necessary change to keep the spirit of Talking Heads alive.

It was 10.30am and 6.30am [illegible] and neither Byrne nor [illegible] were capable of advanced philosophical [illegible] at those hours. The Heads were in the middle of an American tour and Byrne was still in his hotel room which meant he was probably still in bed and he sounded sleepy, vaguely sluggish but [illegible] friendly and [illegible].

The conversation naturally centred around the new album [illegible] which presents the same Talking Heads [illegible] and [illegible] title. Why *Remain In Light*?

"Well it was to emphasise the ethereal feeling [illegible] the [illegible] side of the songs."

Adrian Belew, who [illegible] guitar [illegible] when he took the [illegible] spot with Bowie's band in the 1978 [illegible] has appeared on *Remain In Light* [illegible] Byrne [illegible] tracks. *The Great Curve* where his [illegible] contributions betray him, and [illegible] *Wind*. Belew [illegible] has been playing with his own band in New York, and it was there that Byrne ran into him.

"[illegible] I knew the name of his band. I think it's just the Adrian Belew Band and they were playing around New York on [illegible], Jerry and I went to see him and were impressed so we asked him to play in the studio."

The first side of the new album is devoted to three pieces of jungle funk, [illegible] some of the ideas that surfaced on *I Zimbra* on *Fear Of Music*. Eno, who has co-written the album with Byrne, makes his presence felt in no small [illegible] especially on the [illegible] rhythm [illegible]

which have edged out Byrne's guitar prominence. How does he feel about the keyboards takeover?

"That doesn't bother me because I played lots of other things on the album. I know people might miss the guitar but for me it was more of a challenge to move away from it and play guitar is almost the last thing I wanted to do."

Co-writing with Eno must have altered the methods of songwriting?

"Everything became collaborative because of the method of recording and composition as we [illegible] the studio with nothing and gradually evolved things and added bits. So it has changed in that respect. Also a good part of the music was done before the lyrics and so [illegible] take my cue from the music."

When in New Zealand XTC's Andy Partridge who [illegible] Byrne so to speak said that the forthcoming Byrne Eno album [illegible] because a singer who sang as he [illegible] had [illegible] a [illegible] over [illegible] his [illegible]. He [illegible] that they have [illegible] by using another vocal [illegible] or further association with Eno in a Talking Heads writing capacity. Byrne was [illegible].

"[illegible] don't know."

Trying to wheel David Byrne into a specific discussion of the songs, especially the lyrics of *Remain In Light*, was difficult for reasons that will become obvious.

The opening track *Born Under Punches* looks to be a [illegible] of [illegible].

"It was [illegible] the lyrics from [illegible] people who were on the radio who [illegible] some very [illegible] metaphors [illegible] phrase [illegible] that would [illegible]. I don't know [illegible] down [illegible] what [illegible] though we [illegible] very hard on the lyrics for the album."

How does he see the album [illegible]?

"[illegible] very differently, although some of the [illegible] sounding not so different as I thought [illegible] the underlying principle is very different, the way that the songs hold together as they don't have any chord changes. Over the first three our style changed gradually but for the new one it has changed suddenly and now it has a different emphasis as the singer is not so emphasised and the songs are more about general philosophies than about personal ones."

Not only has the band's album style changed but they've also made changes in their live performances by including more on stage.

"The new enlarged band has been going real well with people like Busta Jones on bass, Bernie Worrell from the Funka[illegible] and Steve Scales. Nona Hendryx [illegible] with us but Dolette McDonald [illegible] independent [illegible] around New York."

So how does it feel fronting a much enlarged line up?

"There's less emphasis on personal catharsis on stage as there are more people doing little [illegible] and the nature of the music has more of an ecstatic celebratory feeling but I still have to come forward and [illegible] all [illegible] always [illegible] over and plays synthesiser [illegible] percussion. Everyone [illegible] is enjoying themselves."

This [illegible] new wave [illegible] Festival [illegible] with such [illegible] as The Pretenders, Costello and Pockets [illegible] said that Talking Heads [illegible] style of music [illegible] The new [illegible] Heads were [illegible].

Remain In Light [illegible] especially [illegible] the African [illegible] Byrne's term [illegible] side [illegible] and [illegible] people who [illegible] happy [illegible] the [illegible] of the earlier albums [illegible] own [illegible] Byrne's singing [illegible] elements [illegible].

Take a look at these lyrics [illegible] as *Born Under Punches* [illegible] the song [illegible] *Crosseyed* [illegible] Once In A Lifetime [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] by using Eno's pastoral [illegible] by way of *Another Green World* the following track *Listening Wind* is probably the most beautiful song Talking Heads have come up with. Finally *The Overload* slow and menacing [illegible] arrangement of [illegible] despondency that is stamped with Eno's hallmarks.

Comparing the new album is difficult because it is so different from the other three but suffice to say that *Remain In Light* succeeds as a fourth Talking Heads album. And that of course makes it mandatory.

When comes [illegible] a most [illegible]

— [illegible]

TWO HEADS TALKING

Originally planned as an interview with Jerry Harrison due to a cock up it eventuated as a long talk with Tina Weymouth. A week later.

Can I speak to Tina Weymouth please?

Yes. Yes, yes. Hello that's Australia?

Yes.

I thought I had stood you up.

It's afternoon in New York. Talking Heads have just completed their U.S. tour. We start with *Remain In Light*.

How's it doing in U.S.?

Well very very well by our standards, much better than radio airplay would indicate. It seems to us we have a good following now. (It [illegible] the album is No. 21 with a [illegible]).

You [illegible] the basic tracks in the Bahamas at Compass Point. How long did it take?

About [illegible] weeks.

Yes [illegible] we could have made [illegible] records but we decided we had our work [illegible]

[illegible] going over [illegible] who [illegible] album. We [illegible] about [illegible]

[illegible] Eno [illegible] did you all approach [illegible] the same way as previous albums?

Slightly different. The [illegible] with the [illegible] Those were [illegible] by David [illegible] and [illegible] by all of us.

There's more [illegible] music on this album. All this sounds [illegible]

[illegible] We [illegible] my first exposure [illegible] music was [illegible] by Manu Dibango [illegible] that record. Don Cherry, the jazz musician has studied a great deal of African music [illegible] having him [illegible] the last few years we've absorbed a lot and rhythms that we thought were [illegible] paying attention to. We did the song *I Zimbra* on the last record and that was written before Eno arrived [illegible] Whether it was the right thing to do. A bunch of white kids trying to play in the style of African musicians. Eno [illegible] still was [illegible] in taking the words of a Dada poet [illegible] David & Eno arranged the vocal line. We also had [illegible] [illegible] can track [illegible] go on the album.

We [illegible] attention to the European tour. [illegible] Heads plan to [illegible] with Roxy [illegible]

Any plans for Australia?

We [illegible] you can imagine touring a band is very expensive with so many people. We've always been a [illegible] wagon band [illegible] but the cost is still high. I would love to take a Japan New Zealand.

You and Chris Frantz are married?

Yes that's correct.

Being the rhythm section of Talking Heads working, living together does that create any problems?

(laughs) We get along just fine. Of course we're only human, it can be stressful.

You wouldn't have much time for housework?

(laughs) Oh yes yes. (laughter)

Who's the cooking?

Yes, [illegible] we [illegible] out a lot.

[illegible]

[illegible] too [illegible] you see about one a month. Then you can get excited about it [illegible]

Tina mentions the Urban Verbs & the Feelies as two she has seen recently. We [illegible] back towards the Eno/Byrne *Life In The Bush With Ghosts* album (delayed until next year) thence to African music, the different perception by musicians [illegible] African music and [illegible] and Eno's forthcoming visit to Africa.

I said somewhere Eno has a whole new psychedelic vision of Africa?

(laughs) [illegible] Right after we'd done the basic tracks for *R.I.L.* he took off for a month in England with his [illegible]

?

And he gets very excited when he works on a project, he gets [illegible] immersed but before [illegible] he [illegible] two days before you start recording. This happens every record [illegible] because [illegible] has a [illegible] and [illegible] the [illegible] way he gets emotionally [illegible] His enthusiasm gets [illegible] enthusiasm [illegible] revolutionary. We [illegible] for Talking Heads but [illegible] that have been played before. But [illegible] That's his prerogative [illegible] gestures.

He's like a catalyst?

Yes very much that, that's why we give him so much authority on the records we've done. We want them to be the best possible.

— RICHARD TURNER

UB 40

Beep buzz tinkle Birmingham waiting" "This is UB 40" (Birmingham accent) G'day (Australian accent) "Who's that?"

I'm Mark Thomson, I'm in Australia

Hang on just look at me list Yep lovely do you wanna talk to one of the band I'm the manager

Sure, sure

I'll pass you over to Ali (Campbell) who's our vocalist.

A. Hello Barry (worse Birmingham accent)

RR: My name's Mark!

A. Sorry (guffaw) this is Al

RR: Is the band coming out here soon, in February?

A. Well there's been a few reports that we are coming out with the Police but that's not true (g eat laughter in the background) There was talk of a tour we'll be doing one but it won't be with the Police

RR: That's a good idea; I'd rather see UB 40 than the Police?

A. You don't like the Police.

(Explanation of teenybopper status of Police in Aust. whilst giving them credit for popularising reggae to a degree).

A. I don't think it's reggae they're popularising so much as dub. They don't play reggae they play rock but it's like dub rock. That's really helped but you can't at the music, we'll wouldn't anyway

RR: Aren't you doing an American tour with them?

A. America? We're still sussing it out a America. We were going to do that with Police but I don't think we're now

RR: It would be great if you could come see here.

A. Well we want to play everywhere really every where our records are selling *(short boring discussion on record sales)*

RR: What kind of reggae do you actually like, specific bands and so on.

A. I listen to Jamaican reggae basically I like British reggae but I listen mostly to Jamaican bands like the Revolutionaries, Gregory Isaacs Burning Spear Big Youth Culture

RR: What about Mikey Dread and those people?

A. Great *Third World War* (recent Mikey Dread Album) have you got that?

RR: Yeah it's fabulous!

A. Amazing Amazing

RR: Is the band interested in getting into that kind of sophisticated production?

A. Yeah, well our new 12 inch of *The Earth Dies Screaming* that's our present single in England It's number ten at the moment. The other side's called *Dream A Lie* We're pretty pleased with that, it's quite over the top dub as I call it. We're going towards a heavier sound

RR: Seek Heavy sound, as more classic dub?

A. More classic dub but we're hoping for a new style of dub our own style Heavier I can't really explain it very well More dubby anyway

RR: *Food For Thought* and *King* ones particularly dub but they've broken through in Australia, where very little reggae, dub or otherwise gets much airplay

A. Yeah it gets people turning to reggae hopefully we can get heavier and heavier What we want is it's a populist dub

RR: Do you see yourself continuing to write political lyrics?

A. Basically we're producing music and the music to be commercially viable at the moment has got to have lyrics, and I think it's got to be lyrics we don't really want to have stupid lyrics. Though we do sing a few silly songs, love songs things like that though I'm not saying that love songs are all y our own ones are anyway. As long as we're writing songs I'm sure they're going to be political in some way. We write about things that are relevant to us or have been in the past

RR: How do you feel about bands such as yourself who start off without having been in 18 bands or waiting til you're 35?

A. The a y s who's feeling worldwide I think the youthful feeling that the youth aren't prepared to work away their lives. It's the same all over Europe. I don't know about Australia but my end of the world people are really rethinking the way of life. There's a lot of new bands around of kids on the dole

RR: It's hard to get equipment and all those hassles.

A. You steal you just steal what you need. Basically the money you get on the dole should be higher. We went through a real lot of shit trying to get our gear together when we were all on the dole basically down to stealing as I said

RR: Have you ever run into problems with Rastafarians accusing you of nicking reggae from black people?

A. No I haven't. Astro who is a Rasta he's had a few barneys with some other dreads. They're racist guys and he doesn't have dealings with them anymore. Those are racist blacks I'm white and I'm singing reggae. All I can say is that it's not black music, because I'm making it and I'm white.

RR: Are you interested in progressing out of dub into, say South American music?

A. Oh yeah I can't say how we're going to go. I expect we're going to go to the reggae but still have all sorts of influences as we listen to more music

There's some great "untapped" music south of the Caribbean.

A. Yeah We used to do some Latiny stuff Afro- like it was, sort of funk. That was because there was an African member of the band at the time but he got deported. He was from Nigeria

Seen you heard any highlife music from Ghana?

A. Oh you mean Fela Kuti that sort of stuff? I don't hear much of it. It's not available sh'e

RR: How do you guys stand on dope; you have got a song called *Reefer Madness* on the 12" single.

A. Well we've just completed our third major tour of Britain and at every gig we had a "Legalise Cannabis" stall. We're into it.

RR: There's a small disorganised Marijuana Party in Australia run by hippies.

A. It's called "whacky" or something out there isn't it? Whacky or something?

RR: No it's just called dope.

A. It's called dope (background laughter) Fair enough

RR: Well it's nice talking to you then.

A. We'll see you out in Australia sometime

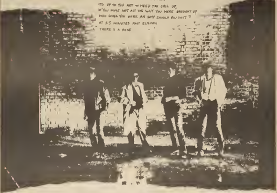
RR: See ya.

— **MARK THOMPSON**

★ THE CLASH ★

THE CALL UP

IT S UP TO YOU NOT TO HEED THE CALL UP
N YOU MUST NOT ACT THE WAY YOU WERE BROUGHT UP
WHO KNOW'S THE REASONS WHY YOU HAVE GROWN UP?
WHO KNOWS THE PLANS. OR WHY THEY WERE DRAWN UP ?
ITS UP TO YOU NOT TO HEED THE CALL UP,
I DON'T WANNA DIE !
ITS UP TO YOU NOT TO HEAR THE CALL UP,
I DON'T WANNA KILL !
FOR HE WHO WILL DIE,
IS HE WHO WILL KILL,
MAYBE I WANNA SEE THE WHEATFIELDS
OVER KIEV AND DOWN TO THE SEA
ALL THE YOUNG PEOPLE DOWN THE AGES,
THEY GLADLY MARCHED OFF TO DIE
PROUD CITY FATHERS USED TO WATCH THEM
TEARS IN THEIR EYES
THERE IS A ROSE THAT I WANT TO LIVE FOR,
ALTHOUGH GOD KNOWS, I MAY NOT HAVE MET HER,
THERE IS A DANCE, AN I SHOULD BE WITH HER,
THERE IS A TOWN UNLIKE ANY OTHER
ITS UP TO YOU NOT TO HEED THE CALL UP,
N' YOU MUST NOT ACT THE WAY YOU WERE BROUGHT UP
WHO GIVES YOU WORK AN WHY SHOULD YOU DO IT ?
AT 5 5 MINUTES PAST ELEVEN
THERE S A ROSE



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ROADRUNNER

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ROADRUNNER 1980 READERS' POLL

Yes, here it is — our second readers' poll, expanded from last year's which was such a great success, particularly the presentation night at Melbourne's Crystal Ballroom with the Sports, Boys Next Door, Lemmy Caution, MEO 245, The Kevins and Bush Turkey and comperes (didn't they give 'em heaps!) Red Symons & Wilbur Wilde (I see they've graduated to Countdown these days — ah well, everyone's gotta start somewhere).

So get your pens out & get your forms into: P.O. Box 90, EASTWOOD, S.A. 5063.

ADELAIDE

Group ____________
Live Group ____________
Radio Station ____________
D.J. ____________

MELBOURNE

Group ____________
Live Group ____________
Radio Station ____________
D.J. ____________

BRISBANE

Group ____________
Live Group ____________
Radio Station ____________
D.J. ____________

SYDNEY

Group ____________
Live Group ____________
Radio Station ____________
D.J. ____________

PERTH

Group ____________
Live Group ____________
Radio Station ____________
D.J. ____________

HOBART

Group ____________
Live Group ____________
Radio Station ____________
D.J. ____________

AUSTRALIAN SECTION

Male Vocalist ____________
Female Vocalist ____________
Group ____________
Album ____________
Single ____________
Live ____________
Songwriter ____________
Tip for 1981 ____________
TV Show ____________

WORLD SECTION

Male Vocalist ____________
Female Vocalist ____________
Group ____________
Album ____________
Single ____________
Songwriter ____________
Tip for 1981 ____________

BRITISH SECTION

Male Vocalist ____________
Female Vocalist ____________
Group ____________
Album ____________
Single ____________
Tour ____________
Songwriter ____________
Tip for 1981 ____________

U.S. SECTION

Male Vocalist ____________
Female Vocalist ____________
Group ____________
Album ____________
Single ____________
Tour ____________
Songwriter ____________
Tip for 1981 ____________

ONE FOR

THE ROAD

ONE FOR

THE KINKS

Record One

Opening
Hardway
Catch Me Now I'm Falling
Where Have All The Good Times Gone
Intro Lola
Lola
Pressure
All Day And All Of The Night
20th Century Man
Misfits
Prince Of The Punks
Stop Your Sobbing

Record Two

Low Budget
Attitude
Superman
National Health
'Till The End Of The Day
Celluloid Heroes
You Really Got Me
Victoria
David Watts

also available
a three track single

LOLA
YOU REALLY GOT ME
CELLULOID HEROES

K 8664

ONE FOR THE ROAD 70161/2

"They survived because they are good, and for no other reason."
– Andy Wickham, The Live Kinks sleevenotes

ARISTA RECORD AND TAPE

MATT FINISH

SILKY SMOOTH

Until their single [illegible] *Africa* came along about a month ago I knew fuck all about Matt Finish. I'd heard the band's name, seen it on Sydney posters (notably ones advertising the wares of the late Stagedoor Tavern) and could dimly recall something about Rick Grossman, fresh from Melbourne's stunning Eric Gradman's Man and Machine, having joined the band.

Actually two members of the band sat at the same table as me at the CBS Convention Pa[illegible] Romance Night (featuring Redgum, Sharon O'Neill and the Romantics) but they didn't talk much, whether through discomfort at being in such an industry gathering or just plain shyness I don't know.

Matt Finish are the last signing to ex-CBS A&R director/producer Peter Dawkins' Giant Recording Company. Dawkins had apparently been keen to sign the band since he last saw them over a year ago but the band wanted to wait a) until they were ready and b) until the right sort of deal was offered. Both conditions having now been filled the first single is in the shops and an album (with Dawkins producing) is on the way.

The single is a double A side. *Mannequin Shuffle*, a sixteenth bass heavy dull rocker, is the side I like best. It reminds me more than a little of the Police but the sound is rounder and not quite as syncopated. The other side, C.A., is a little more uptempo, shorter and lacks the groove impact that makes *Mannequin Shuffle* such a classy offering.

Apart from the afore-mentioned Rick Grossman, Matt Finish comprise Mark Moffitt, guitar and vocals, Geoff Clayton, guitar, and John [illegible], drums. It was Rick however who I talked to over the phone — he in Sydney where the band are based and myself in Adelaide.

Although they are a Sydney band Rick confesses that he [illegible]

"Melbourne's fabulous. They pick up on something really fast down there. It's quite different to here really. Melbourne seems to have an inner city scene although it's nowhere near as big as when I first went down there about five years ago. But there are just no inner city gigs in Sydney any more. About the only place that we can play is the Manzil Room."

So what have you been doing? Playing in the suburbs?

"Yeah. All the time. It can be quite soul-destroying. [illegible] crowd [illegible] really wanted to know was they've seen you on the video or heard your record on the radio. We've been to Queensland and played Melbourne a few times. But now the single is out we'll probably venture further afield."

With more Australian vinyl around at the moment than meat pies and Holden cars combined it seems that Matt Finish are one of the bands who have taken a lot of caution before signing their first [illegible] years away. Rick tells me that they've been fielding recording offers all year.

"Peter Dawkins wanted to sign the band the first time he saw us. But he was still with CBS then and we didn't really want to sign straight to a multinational. You can sort of get lost on the 14th floor, if you know what I mean. But he was one person who was there right from the start before I even joined the band. He'd always wanted to produce us.

"When he left CBS he offered us a deal that had a lot of freedom — we could more or less do what we wanted to do, so we signed with him. But we wanted to get our live thing together. Before we even thought about recording."

With the members of the band (the other three) having been together only just over a year it still seems like a fairly rapid ascent.

"Hmmm ... although we've been working a lot. I've never worked this hard before (laughs). We've been playing six gigs a week for most of the year. I mean you just get in a financial position where to keep the payments going on the gear and pay the crew ... you just have to work.

"It's been quite painful but it's definitely made the band [illegible] up to Queensland was just the ultimate depression but we got through. We got through a few other things that were really terrible too. But it's all coming together now."

I ask Rick if there have been any comparisons between the single and the sound of the Police.

"There have been some, yeah." He utters a mock groan.

What do you think of those?

"Aw ... I dunno ... I think they're quite complimentary in a way. We just use a reggae feel in the same way they do. Heavying it up. A lot of the songs that people compare ... knew Mitt was playing a couple of years ago before anyone had even heard of the Police."

I guess someone was bound to raise that comparison eventually.

"Yeah I think we're very different bands."

Talk gets round to the current flood of good quality home produced record releases. Debut albums by Flowers, Numbers, INXS, Models, Toy Love and singles too numerous to mention seem to indicate a very healthy state of affairs for up and coming bands. Rick having been in a couple of bands who in my opinion compare very favourably with the current crop (Parachute and Man & Machine) I ask his opinion on why it's all happening now and didn't happen then.

"Gosh." He ponders awhile. "I think it's main building up for a long time. I think it's been going to get out of this country too. I really think Australian music is going to make advances in the next couple of years.

"Three years ago record companies were frightened to take a risk on a band. What's changed? Well the success of bands overseas — AC/DC, the Angels I guess. It's similar to what happened when the Knack took in the States. Every company went out and signed up every punk band they could find."

A lot of them got dropped as quickly as they were signed.

"Yeah. But I don't think that'll happen here. Like look at Flowers — they're no overnight success. The reason we hung off so long was we wanted to be able to deliver the goods. Australia doesn't seem to have big overnight success stories."

Joe Dolce?

"[illegible] Dolce (laughs). Well yeah. Perhaps Australian Crawl — but most of the bands have been playing for a while."

An enquiry on my part about Eric Gradman who fronted Man & Machine (along with the Hell Rose Bombers, two of the great [illegible] are last [illegible]) starts Rick reminiscing about the old Melbourne scene. He tells me that Marc Hunter's recording [illegible] Get It Together, a song performed by Spare Change, Parachute and Man and Machine, for his upcoming solo album. Tony [illegible] who wrote that song is writing with Ross Wilson at the moment and it seems likely that Ross will do a version of [illegible] *Big Beat*, a Spare Change, Parachute and Young Modern standard, on his upcoming album. I ask Rick of his regrets making the move to Sydney.

"No I don't regret it. I MISS it. I miss the scene a lot. But this band — it's the type of playing that I've never had before. It's really helping me playing a lot.

"Sydney's so different. You hardly ever see bands playing with each other. I used to go on all the time down there. The only person you ever see jamming with anyone here is Jimmy Barnes. About the only close friend I have in a band here would be Rob Hirst from Midnight Oil."

The Oils helped Matt Finish a lot in the early days, getting them as support on many of their big suburban gigs.

"Going on before them you've gotta do something. They're so passionate about what they do."

So what made you decide to leave Man & Machine if you were enjoying yourself so much?

"Well Eric had this idea that the band should only play one gig a month. Which was fine for everyone else because they all had jobs. The only other thing I can do is teach people how to scuba dive (laugh).

"There wasn't much call for that in Melbourne."

So Melbourne lost a scuba dive instructor and Matt Finish gained a bass player. Chalk it up to experience and the weird and wacky world of rock n roll. Now [illegible] playing Africa?

— DONALD ROBERTSON

BAD POETS

Well the Bad Poets are back on the road. Their reappearance had been eagerly awaited by most of Adelaide's live rock n roll followers. They supported Sydney's Laughing Clowns at the Governor Hindmarsh a couple of weeks ago showcasing a new guitarist and playing an almost entirely new set. A guitarist? Yes — they were looking for a keyboards player but the keyboard players they rehearsed were — as the band diplomatically put it — "all jerks". Then Martin Rigby came along, he was great and hey presto — a new guitarist.

For those who don't know the Bad Poets they formed in January of 1980 and did their first gig at Adelaide University on March 30. The band then consisted of Jade D'Adrenz (D'Adrenaline was too long for forms) on vocals, Marcus Jerrett on guitar, Brogs playing bass, Tim Nicholls on drums and Troy Spear on guitar.

They split in August due to musical differences, as usual, and the search for a keyboards player began.

In those days the Bad Poets were very enthusiastic, very new and very drunk. It was the end of the punk rock thing and they were exciting, energetic, sloppy but more than that. They wrote good songs. Songs with usually excellent lyrics and interesting melodies. And they had Jade up front belting it out, careering, or standing in the middle of the stage looking a little lost and glaring at the ceiling.

Potentially one of the best bands Adelaide has produced, they attracted people's interest but that enthusiasm was qualified by the Poets' erratic behaviour. After a debauched, screwed-up free gig at Flinders University which was supposed to be a benefit for people arrested at the A.C.A. Basement, those honest half the people arrested couldn't get in. They went off the road.

The new Bad Poets is different. They've retained only three songs from the old days: *Sing Another Song* (a World War Three marching song), *The Job* and *Falling At One* (about that desperate urge to couple — to be in love). Jade says it was almost as if the whole band broke up, and four of them decided to go on with Martin Rigby. Five people are writing songs now whereas before it was really only two.

I saw them at their first re-appearance and was surprised. They were subdued and sober. But Jade's presence is as commanding as ever. The sound is tighter and more polished and they work together instead of fighting each other. They are still very strong — just not sloppy. They were nervous. It's hard to present a new sound to over 200 people, some with high expectations and others simply waiting for the Laughing Clowns. Despite difficulties I was impressed and so were most people. As Brogs said: "People expected the Bad Poets to be more rocky but that's behind us now, so we should be ok."

Jade continued: "In the old days we'd go on — I used to think it was a great thing to be on a Friday night. Better than going to a shit party or something. Now we'll be doing the songs more. It takes a while to work out what you like then and what you want to do."

The songs are what I call story songs or picture songs. They evoke images and tell stories about people, places and feelings and a lot of them are political but not slogan-eering. When asked Jade about the lyrics being understated and evocative rather than outspoken, she said:

"If you emphasise things too much [illegible] find the Clash a lot insulting to the intelligence. Like if you say 'Peace not War' it offends the audience's intelligence. In *Ronnie Has A Vision* I saw the guy on TV and he was talking about China and he kept saying 'It's so simple'. *Famous Reaches* is about the same thing — simplicity is dangerous."

The Bad Poets are making a single at the moment which should be out early next year. *Sing Another Song* will be on it and their manif piece *Unexpected Rainfall*. They need more material for an extended set and hope to include a song by Arnold Stauhs from Systems Go and one by Nigel Function or Ruve Black and if any one else has any to offer they're interested because they don't want to do covers. That's very like them.

They are, on you, see completely unclassifiable. They've got a good beat and you can dance to them though. See them soon.

— HEATHER VENS

THIS IS TO ADVISE
Goodtimes
ARE ASSURED
Give the gift of music
the doors
GREATEST HITS
THE DOORS GREATEST HITS
Tom Waits
Heartattack And Vine
JOHN COUGAR
APPROVED
Goodtimes
ADVISORY COUNCIL
SPORTING DIVISION

LIVE NOIZ

THE BIRTHDAY PARTY
THE LAUGHING CLOWNS
THE GO BETWEENS
Paris Theatre Sydney

The Birthday Party essentially commit the body to movement. If you saw the band's audiences at the Paris or the Rock Garden in Sydney however you wouldn't have guessed it.

The Paris is an old theatre. The seats cancel out any real chance people have of dancing and at the Rock Garden well that venue contained an audience full of people who wouldn't need been out of place in England circa 1976.

It never ceases to amaze me how punk, such a catalyst for change, could manage to leave such a residue of conservatism in people's minds. Surely punk meant to break down all institutions, including itself eventually. It generally did and it's a shame so many of the people I saw at these two Birthday Party gigs haven't recognised this. From some of the song requests thrown at the band it seemed as though a lot of people would have preferred to have seen the Boys Next Door.

Brisbane band the Go Betweens began the Paris gig. It was their first southern performance. Considering this, and the reputation of the following two bands, their set exuded confidence.

What impressed me most about the Go Betweens is their dramatic use of space. This technique leaves the song hanging hungrily in the air and leaves the audience squirming uncomfortably in their seats.

The mix tended to leave the guitar textures a little flat, though its jangling collision with the sharp, concise drum sound was a real joy. Simple bass notes which were planted here, there and everywhere were executed with an imaginative dexterity that kept the urge behind the songs constant.

Each song had a spontaneity and rich injection of rhythmic lyricism of its own. Never did the song structures and themes cleave to each other. The Go Betweens' maturity and psychedelic freshness will hopefully be welcomed in Sydney and they should be duly patronised.

The Laughing Clowns topped the bill (played last actually) tonight as this was their final show of the year and they had played under the Birthday Party the previous night. Their set was as usual remarkable. Perhaps not as colourful as I've heard them but it was the most fluid performance I've seen from them. It will be interesting to see the Laughing Clowns after their Christmas layoff. They must break the frontiers they've recently forged to remain an innovative band and hopefully that's what will happen.

Second on the bill and generally speaking number one hot tip to be the most artistically acceptable band Australia has produced (according to that bible of music evolution, the New Musical Express) was the Birthday Party.

Moving with a hungry menace, at times stalking the stage with gritty guitar motifs that protrude from the beast's flesh and at times filling the cavern with huge screaming moans that rolled down over the gaping masses, it's quite obvious the Birthday Party should be worried that their sound won't envelope them, the creators of the monolith that seems almost larger than life.

When Nick Cave's vocals aren't juxtaposing atmospheric scare tones against the romping backdrop, it is Rowland Howard's guitar catcalls that make the noise miss a heck. Not a terribly pretty sound. Jumping to and fro, the rhythms rarely hold still long enough to settle into. And when they do relaxation is never further away as the themes and guitars chase each other through a wild hapless merry-go-round that bounces dangerously close to the gaping cavern of art. Hardly treading nervously one hopes the band doesn't trick itself into tripping over into the dirty thing.

It was as if an explosion occurred on stage at the Paris. All the right things were happening, yet the band seemed to be pushing towards looking for an axis on which to spin off and engage the audience. This transformed the sound into a plodding (dangerous) but plodding animal which was a distinct contrast to the following night's performance at the Rock Garden.

Perhaps it was the more intimate nature of the venue but the sound's jagged edges tore pieces of skin off the bodies. Drops of sweat froze on the flesh and nerve ends were laid bare in the sweaty grime of Tracy Pew's rattling bass notes.

Friend Catcher, the new single, was a free form prism of scathing and thunderous honks. Although the band is very noted that songs aren't expressing the callous imagery rankling in their lyrics and arrangements leaves the senses lost in a... No number as I thought is written to inspire but the execution goes damned close to filling the vacuum it creates.

No questions can be raised concerning the sound. Besides upon hearing the songs all answers are awarded to piffle. Just large rocks and shattered window panes.

The Birthday Party's development has been a rewarding one. Soon, though, their musical collisions will tire and in themselves become institutions. The need will no doubt rise within the band to break when their pre-neolithic orchestrations. The Birthday Party need already nurtured various incarnations of themselves only to find the need to bury them and begin anew. When the new baby is born I want to be the first to hold it.

— CRAIG N. PEARCE

THE BIRTHDAY PARTY
The Crystal Ballroom Melbourne

I don't think Keith Glass (The Birthday Party's manager) could believe his eyes as he walked down the entrance steps to the Crystal Ballroom to see the queue meandering its way almost down to the corner. A few of the Birthday Party themselves may have thought they'd come to the wrong place as they made their way through the line and in through the front door. For it was only in February this year that the Birthday Party had left Australia for the U.K. to break new ground because of the fact that in their own country they'd been neglected by the media and crowds alike.

So now, nine months, one excellent EP, two equally as good singles and one new album later the Birthday Party return very dubious towards the near capacity crowd. Previous to them leaving the country there had been views that the Birthday Party could not put it together live. Well they ambled on stage, tuned up for a few seconds, launched into the first song. They immediately 'clicked' and the scene was set for the rest of the evening. You'll have to excuse me for not listing all the songs played or the correct order but things tended to be very squashy during the proceedings.

'This is a song only a third of you will probably know' was the introduction to *Happy Birthday* by Nick Cave as he ran his hands through his hair with much familiarity. A very tight and compressed version of *Happy Birthday* really got the crowd going. During the course of the night the crowd were introduced to some of the new material which was recorded in London during the BBC John Peel sessions. Songs such as *Figure Of Fun*, *Cry* and *King Ink* all executed with a certain nonchalant air. Rowland Howard would have to be one of the most inventive and visually striking guitarists in Australia today. His slicing guitar and Phil Calvert's drumming are the driving force which pushes Nick Cave's voice to a seemingly endless limit, especially on tracks like *Catman* while Tracey Pew and Mick Harvey provide the backbone of the rhythm. Yet the Birthday Party's unique flexibility allows the synthesiser here and/or saxophone to take the forefront on tracks such as *Mr Clarinet* while Rowland's guitar playing is more subdued. Besides the songs I've just mentioned, the crowd were treated and I mean TREATED to *Hair Shirt* and *Yard* another from the John Peel sessions in which Nick Cave's vocals excel. There was a mandatory applause for *Nick The Stripper* another new one which will hopefully appear on the new album to be recorded in January.

After the first encore the crowd pressed to yell out enough for the Birthday Party to return only to provide an average finish to a brilliant night. There were some 1977 type people yelling out for *Masturbation Generation* and *These Boots Were Made For Walking*. They obviously hadn't realised that it's 1980. There was no third encore. One of the band, Rowland I think it was, came back on stage and announced that they'd plain forgotten all their other games. I don't blame them. How many other Australian bands will sink into oblivion or need to venture to England to receive deserved recognition of their music? Birthday Party are pioneering very exciting and different music and it seems that you have to go to England before you're recognised, even in your own country.

By the time this is printed Birthday Party will probably have completed their semi-national tour and be heading for the recording studio to put down their new album. From there it's back to the U.K. then Europe and the U.S. So if you missed out, listen to their latest album and their new album when it comes out. You'll hear something you may have unfortunately neglected.

— ASHLEY RABB

international

exiles

INTERNATIONAL EXILES
BLUE SCOOTERS
Z CARS
Paradise Lounge, Melbourne

As a rule I usually avoid categorising the music I see. However tonight I didn't have much of a choice. Three bands, three well defined musical styles and a resultant audience of punks, mods and scenery new-wavers out for a slum at the Paradise Lounge.

I arrived about half way through Z Cars' set and soon found myself wishing I'd missed a few more sets of [illegible] along the way. This is a pity as Z Cars are a very good punk band (Category #1) but this was a rather poor night, with neither band nor audience getting particularly interested. *Barbie Doll* was OK, their single was passable, their cover of [illegible] *Saunders* was great, but the usual bell breaks and pogo [illegible]. *W[illegible]* was sloppy even by punk standards. Even so [illegible] that Z-cars are usually the best punk band on the circuit.

Next up were the Blue Scooters who I was seeing fully for the first time mainly to see if a band could get away with playing Mod music (category #2) on their own basis. They began really well with numbers like *So Far So Near* and especially *Fall*. The drummer had an admirably Keith Moon approach and the guitarist who resembled David Reed executed leaps 80 deg as Townsend powerswing. Then just as everything was rolling up, their sound fell to pieces, particularly the vocals. *[illegible] On A Door* was the only other decent song they did. The rest of their set degenerated into a mush of hefty stolen riffs, overreached vocals, and generally mismatched playing. Titles like *David Bailey* (Jam song *David Watts*) and *Stephanie* (character from *Quadrophenia*?) kept us amused but only just. Personally I have always viewed Mods and their music as a fashionable lifestyle relevant to a particular era only, therefore any Mod revival band like the Scooters would be much more entertaining if they restricted themselves to Mod covers with a few originals thrown in. This would also make the parkas, the Lambrettas and everything else just that bit a lot less corny.

The final band on the bill were International Exiles who I'd previously avoided on account of their first giveaway single. I changed my mind on the strength of their latest *Let's Be Sophisticated* EP, are a rather colourful band, slightly arty, who play catchy danceable song tunes (category #3) now and again. Aside from the poorly mixed vocals, *Magnified*, *Lover Boys*, *Rasnoke* and *Someone New* were all good songs. They are very 1950s-influenced really, especially the crunchy keyboards and backing vocals but never to the extent of being derivative. Their problem proved to be a rhythm section becoming just a little too plain with each song and too heavy a reliance on a keyboardist who lacked the necessary [illegible] and timing to make each song an event. I only suspected their single would prove to be the highlight of their set, which it was. They then finished off with a couple of amusing ditties featuring Blue Scooters on backing vocals and various other drunken pseudo celebrities wandering around on stage.

So while it wasn't an evenly exciting night of music, that didn't seem to be the point really. The fact that three bands from Mod through Punk to Pop could climb onstage and perform without taking themselves overtly seriously really seemed to be the most important thing.

MICHAEL LYNCH

THE SCIENTISTS
Broadway Tavern, Perth

Call it pop or call it rock n roll, The Scientists have their pitch together to such an extent at the moment that they are almost impossible to flaw.

The band operate as a three piece now that rhythm guitarist Ben Juniper has left for India and actually sound better for it. Many of The Scientists' older songs have been re-worked (notably *Shake Together Tonight*) and each member can now be appreciated much more, particularly Ian Sharples who plays his bass like a rhythm guitar on *Making A Scene*.

The improvement in Ian Sharples' bass playing is complemented by James Baker's propellant drumming which has never sounded better. And the area in the band's sound which could be expected to suffer as a result of Juniper's departure is full and lacking due to the sheer talent of Kim Salmon. His bittersweet guitar work leaves no gaps in The Scientists' wall of sound and his superb vocals give a tough but tender edge to each song. He's also a pop craftsman with an uncanny sense of melody and now seems much more charismatic and confident on stage.

There are so many excellent songs in The Scientists' repertoire that to seek highlights in their performance is extremely hard. All is likely honest and confidence is at a maximum. It seems that the band operate on an almost supernaturally perfect level and include maybe two weaker songs to provide contrast on what is otherwise a plateau of brilliance.

Of the older songs performed, *She Said She Loves Me* remains a favorite but *It's For Real* and *Last Night* (from the group's last E.P.), *Girl*, *Frantic Romantic* and *That Girl* are just as insurpassable.

It seems that in terms of creativity the band are currently at a zenith because the new songs are both inspired and inspiring. *Shadows Of The Night* is an empire built on a foundation put down by Bob [illegible]. *It's So Easy* is an insidious [illegible] song. And then there are gems like *Teenage Dreamer*, *I've Been Stood Up*, *Larry*, *The Things She Says* and the emotional *I Don't Want To Sing Another Love Song*. I could go on and on and will.

The Scientists are a very rare band in Australia nowadays. They are one of the very few groups to be breaking new ground while retaining a healthy respect for the roots of rock'n'roll. They are a West Coast pop band in the best sense of the term and their music is in the tradition of The Flamin' Groovies, Big Star and The Last. Quite simply they are the best thing around at the moment.

But here's the tragic twist. The night I saw the band for this review the venue was hopelessly empty. Perhaps forty people were there to experience nirvana in sound. I've never seen The Scientists perform better and their reward was for the management to replace them the week after because they didn't draw a big enough crowd. Now they play only one gig a week.

I wonder if The Beatles had been playing that night how many people would have turned up? They just don't realise.

— KIM WILLIAMS

The Birthday Party
Peter Lillie
La Femme
International Exiles
The Go Betweens

The Residents
Snakefinger
Tuxedo Moon
Dead Kennedys
Flying Lizards
Young Marble Giants

Missing Link
hope you have
a new year . . .

SYSTEMS GO

NUVO BLOC

VARIOUS ARTISTS

The SMMM Compilation
(EmEmEm Records)

Memories of Adelaide rock n roll. Gee wiz. Three years I lived there and it's two more since I left. In that time I've returned once (about a month ago) for a visit where I saw virtually no local bands but heard lots about the ones I didn't see.

If there was one thing that stuck in my memory round the last trip it was hearing Nuvo Bloc's independent single. Can Australian records be that good? *Atomic Fiction* was enough to make me re-evaluate everything that worries me about Sydney rock'n roll.

I now regret not asking a friend's persuasive advice and staying an extra night. But that's the way it goes.

And what do I remember about the rock n roll scene in Adelaide? Mostly the heady days of the first explosion of punk. The safety pins. The torn T shirts. The Sex Pistols.

They say heroes are made at night but as far as I'm concerned heroes were made in Modern Love Songs, Adelaide's only new wave record shop.

Then there was Street Fever Mk. Donald (Roadrunner editor you fool) Alex Ebert and the Elizabeth gang. These were the days of Young Modern's first performance at the Unley Town Hall and Chuckie Suicide was on hand to report that "The support band, the Young Moderns, played to an audience of a single drunk swaying on the floor in time to the music!? I didn't like them either.

Thank you Chuckie.

These were the days when half the population of Elizabeth aged under 20 were in *Mosz*. They were interviewed in the first Street Fever which was laid out on the floor of Modern Love Songs one Sunday afternoon. We thanked Steve, who ran the shop, but we couldn't spell his name properly.

Filth and the Psycho Surgeons came to town and they were bigger news than they were in Sydney.

Debbie Harry made a promotional tour. Blondie came soon after and the Apollo Stadium was only a third full.

SKA banned Sex Pistols records and we waited outside Modern Love Songs for *Never Mind The Bollocks*.

I argued with my friends in the Australian Independence Movement that punk was a leg bands working class movement that should be supported instead of derided. I played the Curtises *We Want The Right To Work* to illustrate my point. They didn't see my point.

There was a lot of talk round the Accountants. They were getting it together mmmm. We waited.

Roadrunner started cause we hadn't sold enough copies of Street Fever to pay the print bills.

The Accountants finally hit the stage at various parties around the city. Many thought they should have stayed in the basement, but at least Adelaide had a real PUNK band. Well they couldn't play could they?

We went to see Riff Raff at the Seacliff before they decided to dress like the Sex Pistols which was before they went to Melbourne and became *Ai'anites*. In them days they played pretty good rock n roll.

And Sceptics Circus played in the hills and around.

People said Neon Heart were worth watching, and The Sultan Brothers pretended to be the Eagles and talked about how much flying into Adelaide was like flying into Los Angeles. We kept a straight face and laughed inside.

Then there was the press invitation to the launching of this new female singer. We all yawned. Her name was Christie Allen. We still yawn but she's rich and we aren't.

The Sports, Dragon, Jo Jo Zep and The Falcons, Skyhooks, Cold Chisel, and stacks of other interstate bands played the suburban and city circuit.

Everyone went to the Marryatville or the Tivoli.

Ray Dyer called himself the Lone Star and made lots of money.

The Suicide Package ... Boys Next Door, Teenage Radio Stars and X Ray Z arrived. Radio Earl threatened to sue *Roadrunner* cause we suggested things about the way he ran his business.

Young Modern kept playing through all this; there is Altona wrote that it wasn't a Friday night in Adelaide if Young Modern weren't playing.

The Lord Melbourne started having rock n'roll bands. They realised there was life after the Lone Rangers.

Roadrunner rejected an ad cause it was sexist.

Clean Cut played around the place.

Mickey Finns destroyed eardrums but people mumbled about them being part of Adelaide's rock heritage. Couldn't see it myself.

Two Way Garden came to town and gave Young Modern a run for their money.

Stiletto played.

The U Bombs brought their distinctive brand of punk to the masses. They played on the lawns at Adelaide Uni which was pretty punk.

Steve Warner and his suburban boys were heralded as the future of rock'n roll ... and The Lone Star's bank account.

Dennis Aubrey nearly got arrested and people started talking about buskers.

We slept outside at Rundle Mall ALL NIGHT to get Dylan tickets.

We went out to dinner DURING Rod Stewart's concert.

We kept putting out *Roadrunner*. Alan Capp kept complaining about no-one doing any work. Donald kept going to prom receptions on layout nights (*really did it whole, you bastard* ... Ed.)

The Warm Jets started playing David Bowie songs.

This was the time of Sid, Adelaide's own Mr Vicious. The only man ever to get his head further into a speaker box than the main speaker. Sid, the regional over nose oil. Sid? And did you finish your higher school certificate? And did you ever actually get to *play* that bass?

And *Roadrunner* put a questionnaire into the middle of its July 1978 issue to help the people who were just starting to plan for an FM station in Adelaide. Its name was 5MMM.

Then the phone call came. Would you like to work for RAM? caught the plane four days later.

Gee mate, good were the days he says sipping his Coopers can (cause you can't buy Sydney time) and reflecting on his rock n roll ... in Adelaide. Time has faded the other things happened in and he's probably forgotten things and exaggerated others. But they're the ones that spring to mind.

And yes Barbara, I know that this is all incredibly self indulgent and I know you're about the only person who'll actually SAY it; others will think and shut up but Hunter Thompson says that writing is like fucking ... it's only fun for amateurs and tonight I think it's fun to sit down like an amateur and have fun again. It doesn't happen often in the big city OOOOoooooooo.

Well, why am I sitting here writing this *anyway*? Roadrunner sure ain't paying. Some things will probably never change.

It's because 5MMM is about to (or maybe has) release a compilation album of Adelaide rock n roll bands. It's something 3RRR and 4ZZZ have never done and that 2JJ only did way back when they first started.

And it's a great, first because if these sort of stations are doing their job and have the right interaction with young bands then they're amongst the people more informed about what's going round "on the streets" mmmm and they were most qualified to do this sort of thing.

I'm only listening to a tape so I don't know what's on the cover, where the tracks were recorded, who produced or anything like that.

On top of that I've never seen any of the bands perform live and with the exception of Nuvo Bloc I've never heard any tapes or singles or anything.

Fresh [illegible] not fetish.

The 5MMM compilation contains 13 tracks from the following: Dagoes, Systems Go, Jumpers, Lounge, Marcos, Bad Poets, Street Corner Jack, Desperate Measures, Hares, Brats, Ungrateful Children, Natasha Kondrasev and Nuvo Bloc.

With the exception of an incarnation of the Dagoes, none of these bands were playing two years ago. In that respect they're post-punk bands.

OK a track-by-track. **The Dagoes'** *Kid's Got Style* is a wonderful urban romanticism with a catchy chorus and pretty nifty guitar lines. But who's got style in Adelaide? (shut up Stuart — stylish ed.) Great honky tonk piano in the background. 7 out of 10.

Everyone tells me **Systems Go** are pretty cool. *Red Light On* has that moody feel of Suicide — the New York band, not the act you Mick. Morbid, moody, more indulgent than this article but very effective. Half way through I'm thinking 'common chaps, get a move on'. Runs out of ideas midway through and doesn't quite have what it takes to sustain itself over any longer. I'll buy the single when it's cut down for radio play. 4 out of 10.

Jumpers' *1986* sounds sloppy as hell but fun. They've nicely assimilated heavy ripped-off stacks of songs and bands but it's a great dance tune. Leaves all the pseudo Sydney ska bands for dead. 7 out of 10.

Lounge's *Race Bissell* (what a silly name) is about as interesting and laid-back as a Sunday afternoon in the Adelaide suburbs. Starts off like a funeral and then discovers 1976 punk rock. Next please. 1 out of ten for the first minute 2/10 for the rest.

Lipstick and Foundation from **Marcos** has neat lyrics about someone's love being just infatuation and is reasonably good. Predictable but quite nice nonetheless. Nice keyboards and vocal buildup. 6 out of 10.

Bad Poets sounds like a description of half the literary scene in Adelaide but I'm told it's a youngish rock n'roll band. *Crash Sweet Crash* is like Siouxsie and The Banshees coupled with a couple of other new wave vocalists from England. Still it has pretty good guitar playing and a vocalist who handles this type of rock'n'roll better than most I can think of. 6 out of 10.

Just [illegible] drinks and continue with the next action packed 10 minutes.

Street Corner Jack sound like The Beatles during their most melodic period. *Every Home* is lightweight, catchy but gets repetitive pretty quickly. We soon realise that every home should have one but one fucking what??? 5 out of 10. Next!

Omnipa It's everyone should have someone like you, which is a fucking boring thing to say and chanting that's been said zillions of times before. Sank to 4 out of 10.

Desperate Measures indeed. *Man In A Grey Hat* features a singer who screeches inane lyrics over a turgid backing of mish mash heard. 2 out of 10. Christ George, people don't pay money to see this do they???

Hares' *Rats* (very mean) is a really aggressive rock n roll with confusing lyrics and neat, rollicking little instrumental bridges. Far from spectacular. 3 out of 10.

Life On The Dole from **The Brats**, now that seems like it'd have reasonably socially conscious lyrics. It's all about, yes you guessed this one too, life on the dole. Quite a reasonable assault on what is a ... powered by driving but predictable rock n roll. Gets a bit repetitive but one of the more captivating songs on this album and a bit more meaningful than most of the others. 6 out of 10.

Ungrateful Children call their song *Good Mates*. It's of the sardonic cosmic variety. Rather cynical and sexual. Reminds me of some of the spoken bits John Cale did with the Velvet Underground. And it makes it's that quick. State your idea and then piss off. That's what I like. 7 out of 10.

Natasha Kondrasev is quite a departure from the rest of the album. The song is *Women Break Out* and it's more straight forward simple rock n roll than most of the other tracks. Its message is simple — women break out. It's not over yet. Lightweight jazzy backing and the whole track stands out 'cause it's more direct and open than any other song on the album. 6 out of 10.

Nuvo Bloc's track, *Never Mind* is a loose little percussive excursion with emphasis on skins, drums, and saxophone. Pleasant enough but not a patch on the three tracks released on their single. 4 out of 10.

And that's the end of side 2. Like any album of this nature it's a varied lot. All the bands are interesting to a degree some more so than others but there's very few cities that have 14 great bands. Sydney sure doesn't. And this album omits some of the finer products of the city ... No Fixed Address and Redgum.

The best tracks I find are from Ungrateful Children, Natasha Kondrasev, Bad Poets, Dagoes and Jumpers. Some of the other bands might be better live or have better songs which for any ruinous reasons weren't included on this album.

My overall reaction is that there's obviously a lot more to Adelaide than what people on the eastern coast realise.

Just about all the music on this album are as good and in some cases much better than the bands operating through independent record labels in Sydney and Melbourne. Hopefully more will be heard of them next year.

It's a credit to 5MMM that this album, varied and erratic as it is, has been released and it should inspire more records of a similar nature.

STUART COUPE

(*See you next time you come to Adelaide, MATE. Ed.*)

Virgin Ground is the first album they've produced for their new label. It's by far the most interesting record produced in Australia this year — and the most important for a number of reasons.

Redgum are explicitly political. They write about issues — migrants, uranium, exploitation. They are unashamedly Australian and they attack their work directly. This album shows great development in nearly all the fields of endeavour from last year's *If You Don't Fight You Lose*. They're still direct, but now their music is just so much more polished and their message more accessible.

This well produced album means that Redgum are now fully fledged as recording artists. The music's good, varied, uncharacteristic beyond something like "folk rock" but a definite improvement from the first album. Above all Redgum are humorous as well as political, sweet, [illegible] their bitter gist of Australia's social evils with our national wit.

— LARRY BUTTROSE

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THE BIRTHDAY PARTY
The Birthday Party
(Missing Link)

Like the Boys Next Door debut this album catches the Birthday Party between stations on an underground train journey that has no clear destination.

It was recorded in late '79 and early '80 and any rabid follower will already have most of it in single or EP form, but there's a dark coherence to the album that's sufficient reason for notice to be taken of it. It's more than a document of the sea changes that the band underwent in 1979 as they escaped from the claustrophobia of their punk origins and the lush indulgence that marked their sound after Rowland Howard joined; despite the fragmented nature of many of the ideas presented here, there's a sense of liberation in the structures that justifies the use of such meaningless terms as "milestone" not only in the enervated context of Australian rock, but in that wider world of new musick that the Birthday Party can justifiably claim a place in.

And unlike Pere Ubu or the late Pop Group (the two bands who are the obvious late seventies reference points for the Birthday Party's unholy melange of tortured funk rhythms, scattershot guitar attacks and distraught vocals) Cave, Howard and company have yet to work themselves up a constricted alleyway. The reasons are obvious and vital: major ones are their continued use of guitar textures and Nick Cave's magnificent multi-level vocals that can mock, declaim and parody themselves in the course of one song. On a track like *Happy Birthday*, which is born the most spontaneous and effective track here, his singing is as studied and uninhibited as that of the finest vintage rockabilly vocalists and it's his voice that is always the focus in the internal sound.

Not everything here works. The cover of Gene Vincent's classic bit of rockabilly voodoo *Cat Man* fails because the guitars scratch too tastefully over Cave's mannered vocals. In producer Keith Glass might have seen an oblique parallel between the Birthday Party's stance and that of that great, doomed rock'n roll anarchist who wrote the song, but the end result doesn't exploit available possibilities.

Elsewhere monotony isn't avoided, notably on Rowland Howard songs like *Riddle House*. Howard's approach to song creation is to set up simple, session tinged riff patterns and hope that sufficient tension can be created to make them interesting, but it's on his tracks that the fine line between anarchic invention and boredom is most often crossed.

Don't look for conventional reference points on this record: occasionally there's a hint of classic pop structure (*Waving My Arms*) that's so subverted almost as soon as it raises its head, and though the excellent Tracy Pew-Phillip Calvert rhythm section pile on sudden bursts of funk, there's none of the deliberate play with forms like there is in self-conscious psychedelia that so many of the Birthday Party's overseas contemporaries play with. If this record is as rewarding as it's essential, it's because of the openness and adventure with which the sounds are made. In their Boys Next Door incarnation this band showed they could exploit the conventional with ease — this time around they're on a more difficult journey but it's one which may make them the most important Australian band of the eighties.

— **ADRIAN RYAN**

CHEAP TRICK
All Shook Up
(CBS)

Lovers of heavy metal arise! Lovers of subtlety beware! Cheap Trick hereby serve notice that they are no longer willing to hide behind their old devices of zany humour, teen sex appeal, Beatle mimitations and pretty ballads. These were all wearing a bit thin anyway. And after the success of the last album, the Group Most Likely To tag doesn't really apply any more. Strip away all this and all that is left is the realisation that Cheap Trick have always played some pretty loud & heavy stuff. Made more palatable perhaps by the fact that they were always good for a few laughs, that Robin Zander was too cute to be true but could sound like Paul McCartney (also too cute to be true) at the flick of a Rick Nielsen monogrammed plectrum. But heavy stuff just the same.

Now on *All Shook Up*, Cheap Trick have played Heavy Metal as their trump card, in fact as their only card. Now this wouldn't normally bother me too much as I like a good scream every now and then with the rest of them. What is perturbing for Cheap Trick fans, especially after the success of *Dream Police*, is that *All Shook Up* is their least inspired release to date. Only *Just Got Back*, *High Priest of Rhythmic Noise* (is a Cheap Trick being a Erasion with a Vanmeert) and, with a push, *Can't Stop It But I'm Gonna Try* rise to contenders for the Cheap Trick Catalogue of Passable Songs — and three out of ten IS bad! The imitations haven't stopped either, and in attempting to ape bands such as Led Zep they must necessarily fall a bit short. Roger Daltrey is another voice that springs to the ears. Hopefully for Cheap Trick fans this is just a stop gap album between ideas and not a sign of permanent decline, for on my money I'd stay clear of strangers who are full of praises for this album — they deserve not to be taken too seriously.

ADRIAN MILLER

JOHN LENNON/YOKO ONO
Double Fantasy
(Geffen Records)

Newcomers to the 80s rock scene John Lennon and Yoko Ono have placed together a 'Heart Play' of simple charming love songs, ranging from the grossly sentimental through the whimsical to the brutally frank. The songs have been written and performed separately, seven each, but are presented in alternative sequence to give a collaborative effect.

Of the two I would have to say that Yoko's songs are the more adventurous, sounding at times like a Japanese version of Lene Lovich. *Kiss Kiss Kiss*, the first of her songs to be presented and the B side of the single, is a lightweight but infectious little number which I imagine would have wide disco appeal. It concludes with a series of Donna Summer like moans and groans which suggest that the Japanese may know more about it than is obvious from the song. Yoko's other two songs on side one, *Give Me Something* and *I'm Moving On* are quite good indeed. Both are brief and to the point, have good lyrical ideas and are even sung quite pleasantly.

Save your sweet talk for when you score
I want the truth and nothing more. (I'm Moving On)

Yoko begins her side two efforts on a light note with *I'm Your Angel* in which she tra-la-las across the essential taste with a tune stolen from the thirties, embellished with fairy tale lyrics. Takes a lot of self-confidence to attempt to pull this sort of thing off these days. Next up is *Beautiful Boys*, an ease ballad which just goes to show. *Every Man Has A Woman Who Loves Him* would have been a truly wonderful song sung by somebody else ... high majestic etc. Unfortunately it doesn't suit her voice at all. Likewise with *Hard Times Are Over*, a gospel style song which doesn't go close to working for her. This is unfortunate as it is the last track on the album. It may leave you a bit flat, wondering whether perhaps your turntable could have been put to better use.

I have a feeling though that it will be John Lennon's contribution that will prove most popular. Less ambitious, his lyrics are for the most part fairly trite (except, for example, for a tender lullaby in which he tells his son that 'life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans'), but his melodies are simple and readily caressing, his voice uniquely appealing and the band which includes guitarists Earl Slick and Hugh McCracken, bassist Tony Levin and drummer Andy Newmark, sounds more at home with the more traditional rock n roll approach of Lennon. Album opener is the single *(Just Like) Starting Over* which, like other Lennon selves on this album, stands up very well to repeated listenings — once you get over the initial discovery that nothing startlingly new is being said or done here. Owes more to the age of Holly and Presley than to that of Gary Numan. *Clean Up Time* and *I'm Losing You* follow and these are both medium paced numbers that slide comfortably out of the speakers, while still managing enough bite to hold your attention. Side One closes with the above-mentioned lullaby *Beautiful Boy (Darling Boy)* which is fine if tender lullabies are your thing. Side Two contains a couple of banal ballads, *Watching The Wheels*, about a man who is quite content to have given up his faster lifestyle for something a little less hectic, and *Woman*, a very sincere and touching love song indeed. In fact it is worthy of a bit of airplay if not consideration for a future single. The universality of this song, however, is lost in Lennon's final contribution which is also his weakest. *Dear Yoko* makes it overtly clear that the two artists on the album have a mutual interest which extends beyond the music, but this fact is not essential to the rest of the album, and beyond being a happy fit a bounce-a-long song, it adds no weight to Lennon's claims as a songwriter.

While *Double Fantasy* is by its nature a sedate and pleasant album, rather than a bone-shaking earth-shattering one, I am unwilling to just stand by and let it be labelled dull or inconsequential. It is as its title suggests, an excursion into fantasy, and on that level it makes an enjoyable debut album. I most writers would have handled its themes much less gracefully.

PEARL McCOURTREIGH

DR FEELGOOD
A CASE OF THE SHAKES

DOCTOR FEELGOOD
A Case Of The Shakes
(United Artists)

How can I expound the virtues of this magic piece of vinyl without resorting to cliches? If you enjoyed the band live during their Australian tour you'll love this. If you didn't go and see them, you'd better have a good excuse. I hate pikers!

From the opening hammer *I Jumped From Love To Live* it's obvious that Nick Lowe has heavily applied his usual production techniques, and don't they work wonders! One or two of the Feelgoods post-Wilko albums have been clouded by a murky sameness. Not this time. Loads of reverb on Lee Brilleaux's vocals and the Big Figure's drums, pulverising bass and Gyp Mayo's razor sharp chords combined with Lowe's brand of knob twiddling add a new dimension to a tried and true genre. Play it doesn't work quite so well for Rockpile.

A Case Of The Shakes should finally put to rest any remnants of the 'Wilko-Johnson-is-the-heart-n-soul-of-the-Feelgoods-and-they-haven't-been-the-same-since-he-quit' argument. The album is something of a rarity in that it's truly a group effort, without actually sounding anonymous. The only other white r'n'b band of the moment which seems to enjoy such studio camaraderie is the Fabulous Thunderbirds, a tough collection of purists if ever there was one. Keith Richards is too busy having complete blood transfusions these days to make music as vital as this.

Look, the album is so good it makes me sweat. The only disappointment is that the vinyl doesn't reek of stale cigarettes and spilled beer. The Feelgoods don't necessarily pound the lowlies into submission, but they insist that you join them in an unbridled celebration of modern music's messiest hybrid — pub rock.

This doesn't mean that they're incapable of subtlety. Listen to *Violent Love*. It's an infectious exercise in incongruity. Over subtle acoustic jazz chords and deft brushwork from Figure, Brilleaux croons, 'I want to make violent love to you'. Evidently some of Rocker Lowe's twisted humour has rubbed off on these lads.

On the strength of this album, Dr. Feelgood are surely the act that Stiff wish they'd signed. It's loaded with balls, volume, blues ... and credibility.

— **MARK CORNWALL**

THE SAINTS
always in the mirror... their new single out now
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THIRTY THREES THIRTY THREES THIRTY

BLONDIE
Auto American
(Chrysalis)

Concept albums either work brilliantly or fall flat on their plastic faces. Blondie are the latest to try and conceive a concept and test our perception. Their latest fiasco is one of these pointless concept trips. *Auto American* is about the fantastic pleasures of living in a land where class and culture are two different things. Only in an ambiguous way is there any metaphor which at least attempts to join these two poles together.

Auto American can easily be filed into a... string and really dull. There are a few [illegible] which [illegible] as so-called songs. Also the album completely supports the myth or truth in the statement that disco music is mostly dull and lifeless.

Blondie have made the mistake of recording some [illegible] non-original songs, *The Tide Is High* and *Follow Me* against the group's own pointless compositions. Just because they are so famous as they are does not give them the right to waste precious flat black plastic.

Auto American is the disco extravaganza that the group said they would someday release (and we all thought they were joking). *Live It Up* is one of the [illegible] disco pieces. Nothing really happens. The only new thing is hearing how badly Deb Harry['s] voice... (she would make a bad actress).

Blondie venture in to cool 30s jazz with a few numbers. *Here's Looking At You* is really inane. Singing about being drunk and falling in love, the two worst subjects ever to write another song about. Sometimes love songs can be truly wonderful. But this time, no way. The music is great though.

As with *Here's Looking At You*, alcohol and romance again rear their ugly little heads. One line sums up Blondie's attitude to all this: "I give you Honey, give me a beer". Ah this has gone to *Go Through It*.

The only time the group really fires is on *The Tide Is High*. This is a fantastic song and the arrangement is even better. Great to dance to and even better to hear on the radio. But it's really just another song sung by a foolish romantic. *Walk Like Me* returns to that kind of last year called rock music. You can also dance to this, just another pop song though.

Raptu[r]e deals with [illegible] called [illegible] Harry/Stein knowledge about the planet Mars. Oh [illegible] they still read comics because when you write lines like "the man from Mars, stopped eating cars, now he eats guitars" you have to be dumb or else you'd feel embarrassed. This song also contains another dialogue... Blondie's message: "Flesh is last, flash is cool". Fly *Auto American* on it.

— **DIRK WARHOL**

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EASYFEVER!

THE EASYBEATS
Absolute Anthology
(Alberts)

Why Australian record companies don't generally make music of this stature available in its original form is beyond me. Copies of Easybeats albums have been changing hands under the notorious bidding system for three years or so. There is no justification for having kept this music under wraps for so long. One wonders if it would have ever seen the light of day but for Glenn A. Baker's [illegible].

People of my age are encountering some of this material for the first time, and a little authenticity would add to the fun (for instance the superb Raven re-issue series, not to mention the end of disgraceful practices like bidding and bootlegging).

Listening to this compilation is like stumbling upon the dead sea scrolls. It's a document of huge importance. Simply: Apart from being a superb chronology of the Easys' finest minutes, it contains a detailed history of the band. Utterances of 'Turn ma Easyfever' penned by the redoubtable Baker. He doesn't merely sing praise on their already acknowledged brilliance. Some horrific home truths about the age of Easyfever are revealed: the personal tragedies of several of the members, their treatment at the hands of brutally opportunistic management, the lot. Really, it's a most worth grabbing for Baker's biography alone. Read it. You'll never need ask again why good bands bust up.

Early Easys' singles sound primitive in the best sense of the word. The fact that they managed to project so much energy on such crude recording equipment is testimony to their power in a live situation, assuming you could hear them over the screaming. From the self-conscious r'n'b of the debut release *For My Woman* the band evolved into a seemingly unstoppable hit making machine. And what hits they are too! The first phase of the Easys is probably a personal favourite to many of you for nostalgic reasons as much as anything else. Stevie's histrionic vocals, songs like *Women*, *Sorry*, *I'll Make You Happy* and the rest pulled Australia out of the cultural doldrums of plastic beatle wigs, Little Pattie and Brian Henderson. I still shudder at the memory.

With their move to England, the group switched producers from Ted Albert to the infamous Shel Talmy. Some have credited Talmy with giving The Who those stuttering, falsetto harmonies which were such a trademark of *Happy Jack* and the like. His work on *Friday On My Mind* ensured the classic status it now enjoys, although his association with the Easys was to be short lived. One of the most powerful tracks on the anthology is *Do You Have A Soul?* which was reportedly dedicated to Talmy.

Friday On My Mind also saw the break-up of Stevie Wright's career as a lyricist and the beginning of Harry Vanda and George Young's empire of two. From this point on the Easys' music displayed a slightly more exotic flavour, then slightly more erotic and finally downright mean, with a few exceptions. They practically [illegible] the turntable as you [illegible] such is the profusion of overblown psychedelia surrounding them. By the time of *Falling Off The Edge Of The World* and *Peculiar Hole In The Sky* the Easybeats song titles were almost as long as the tunes themselves. Their artistic credibility is strained by the fact that they didn't really sound comfortable with big production at that stage. Apart from that, their management were still arranging crass publicity stunts which made the Monkees look like the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Much of the later Easybeats material sounds derivative, and lacks continuity, like [illegible] pieces. Unknown *Satanic Majesties* and *Magical Mystery Tour*. It seems they're in and out of their arrangements and melodies. This is not to say they aren't fascinating period pieces. There's more on antimated ska tune *Specials*, anyone? It's almost as if the band were deliberately trying to be more far out than the competition, which is partly why so much psychedelic rock music is shit anyway. For a while their inherent energy was submerged beneath a very badly built wall of sound.

Most of Side Five is a definite improvement, although still [illegible] of [illegible].

The high point is undoubtedly *St. Louis*, in which the Easys shake all over for almost the last time. Unfortunately the band disintegrated before their apparent revitalising for soul in the studio could be fully realised.

As a musical history, it's obviously patchy and unreliable. What Baker already goes to the trouble of putting it all in proper perspective, it's definitely worth a personal look. What a record. Hope you buy it before you get old.

— **MARK CORNWALL**

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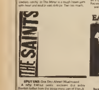
FORTY FIVES FORTY FIVES FORTY FIVES

MENTAL AS ANYTHING *Romeo & Juliet* (Regular)

A catchy classy sixties chestnut exhumed and injected with the Mentals irrepressible sense of bounce and fun. It sounds so right for the lads they could almost have written it themselves. At 2 mins 12 secs, it's a real short length but *Fiji Go Down* is traditional Sydney boogie stomp.

THE SAINTS *Always* (Lamiko)

The magn... Saints have done t again! After the superior excellence of the *Paralytic Tonight* EP comes a more than worthy follow up. The key to the new Saints is emotion. I haven't seen anyone this yet doing with as much feelings as Chris Bailey. If passion ... then the Saints are no ordinary band. *Always* features Bailey loud and ... a soulful saxophone and a hand that rocks without having to break the speed limit. It's also incredibly catchy. *In The Mirror* is a rough hewn gem with heart and soul in vast ... Two ... much.



SPLIT ENZ *One Step Ahead* (Mushroom)

A nifty foldout ... encloses this ... Beatlish ballad from the ... pen of Finn Jr. The Enz have developed ... a taut 80s pop band and this single is further evidence of their growing prowess. It's simple, effective and *focussed*. When such musical talent as the individual Enz undoubtedly possess ... and directed the effect is shattering. If this is the current state of the art then next year's album should be a stunner.

THE SINGLES *Someone That I Knew* (Basilisk)

... guitar muted ... rhythm and catchy chorus ... another ... 80s pop single from Sydney ... production ... Spector ... Basilisk have just come up with the ... of sound ... compelling ... a new bws.

THATS JUST SOMEONE THAT I KNEW

THE METRONOMES *A Circus Like Me* (Cleopatra)

A modern song full of ... modern words. Clicks and beeps ... from speaker to speaker. This was probably good fun to make, slightly less to listen to.

THE PRODUCTS: *Power Plant* (Method Records)

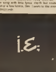
Another synthesiser duo. *Powerplant* vaguely cheery and uplifting (must be the whistling one the lyrics are of the modern abstract variety). Speeds up rapidly towards the end but not enough to lift the track out of the sale.

EASYBEATS: *Son of Easyfever* (EP) (Raven)

Which brings us to ... Five dusty ... from the Vaults of Albert Productions dug out as usual by Glenn A. Baker. If Glenn's marvellous Easybeats *Absolute Anthology* doesn't completely satiate your craving then these five cuts, one of which is an 'impossibly rare' Coca Cola ad originally issued on a Coke promo EP might provide a tasty tidbit. Recording quality is very passable and the songs well they're brilliant of course.

INTERNATIONAL EXILES: *Let's So Sophisticated* (M... Link)

Back to the 60s. The Exiles have an interesting sound. Piano & organ ... rhythm, distinctive vocals from female singer Lane and good deep ... from keyboardist Andy Calender. A fashion song with little lyrical depth but sounds great after a few listens. Gee, I seem to like everything this month.



PINK FINKS ...

Another ... the use ... Accord... ... Wilson himself ... was only 14 when these ... was 1965 ... Wilson sing ... his voice ... music ... basic rootsy blues ... marvellous.

SEKRET SEKRET: *New King Jack* (...)

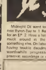
For some ... reason this disc drags ... Johnny O'Keefe's ... April, a Barry Gibb song that was an almost British hit in 1967. However the ... who were playing it ... closed down by the Government ...

... before it could make the crossover to the BBC. So nowadays Johnny hosts "Young Talent Time" ... Sekret Sekret have ... that same ... that made the Bee Gees so wonderful in 66 and 67. This is a very intriguing and wonderful single. New psychedelia anyone?

—DONALD ROBERTSON

MIDNIGHT OIL

Bird Noises (EP) (Powderworks)



Midnight Oil went to the Music Farm near Byron Bay to 1. Record some tracks for an EP 2. Have a break and a bit of a muck around in the studio 3. Do something else. On listening to the EP I'm having trouble deciding whether it's a worthwhile progression from their previous recordings or whether it's only the bare sort of four tracks that it is because they've run out of ideas or (shock horror) whether it's just plain old lovable ART.

After two albums that basically begin in the same place, even if the second is more successful in capturing the ... sound of the band, the Oils seem to have overgone a bit of a facelift in recording this EP.

Still the drums and still Garrett's vocals out front of the mix but this time there's much more separation in the instruments. Maybe sterility and definitely coldness. And if it's coldness they are striving for they certainly achieve it in the lyrics. Never before have the band's lyrics painted personal human pictures so black as they have here.

Sure they've told us about the bus to Bondi and they've mentioned a chain reaction and they keep telling us to piss off up north and run by night but they haven't ... all hope for man as they have in *No Time For Games*:

What opportunity the modern child
Wasted passion and wasted mind.

And all the bitterness stems from and is aimed at that much maligned collection of people that most of us belong to called the middle class. Lyrics are written to point out things such as sporting aggressions and the emptiness of words and other such trivialities that go hand in hand with the aforementioned social stratum. The boys are vainly trying to be working class with lyrics like,

You got much less well it seems like more

and,

At the best hotel of all
Put my name on the wall and my snot on the floor (Knife's Edge)

Seems like wasted sweat to me but maybe they're telling us to face up to our ... destinies and work within the middle class. Somehow ... I think the Oil's smart enough for that through all the passion in the headphones.

Wedding Cake Island is a country and western questionmark. If this is a progression then it's a waste of time and if it's a joke then it's not much better. Sounds like it was written in a quiet corner during a loud party.

When the Oil's lyrics are arty and psychedelic that's when I most enjoy them:

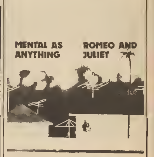
Kite parcels in my finger
Got a feeling in this rescue

It's In The Cord

Great stuff mate. Probably an anti-drug song that seems to be a little hypocritical. Not getting flakey are we boys? Cause it sure sounds like it.

Well there it is, the last paragraph and I still haven't decided what the EP is. That's a lie really. I've decided that whatever I decide isn't very important anyway. If this EP had one and a half songs on it and not four then it could be termed challenging and imaginative. As it is, well.

– CRAIG N. PEARCE



CRITICS CHOICE

STUART COUPE

It's time again for that fabulously useless ritual where rock'n'roll critics, writers, reviewers and hacks sit down to list their favourite/best records for the year.

And what does it all mean Johnny? Who's to say whether Springsteen's *The River* is better than Dexy's *Searching For The Young Soul Rebels*? How do you decide? And does it matter?

What follows is an unordered list of records that've affected me over this wonderful year. They're records that for me have the spirit and passion that keeps my love affair with rock'n'roll from disintegration. If they affected you too then that's great. If you ain't heard 'em then maybe you will and if you did hear 'em and nothing happened to your heart, feet, spine or brain then them's the breaks. Better luck next time.

ALBUMS

Bruce Springsteen — *The River*
Dexy's Midnight Runners — *Searching For The Young Soul Rebels*
Mink DeVille — *Le Chat Bleu*
Marianne Faithfull — *Broken English*
Iron City Houserockers — *Have a Good Time But Get Out Alive*
Carolyne Mas — *Hold On*
Ellen Shipley — *Breaking Through The Ice Age*
Southside Johnny and The Asbury Jukes — *Love Is A Sacrifice*
Ronnie Spector — *Siren*
Smokey Robinson — *Warm Thoughts*
Dead Kennedy's — *Fresh Fruit From Rotting Vegetables*
Gang Of Four — *Entertainment.*
Mark Gillespie — *Only Human.*
Flowers — *Icehouse*
Redgum — *Virgin Ground*
Pebbles — *all 10 volumes of classic mid Sixties punk, surf and psychedelia*
The Cramps — *Songs The Lord Taught Us*
Joy Division — *Closer*
Jim Carroll — *Catholic Boy*
Lou Reed — *Growing Up In Public*
Sports — *Suddenly*
Talking Heads — *Remain In Light*
Eric Carmen — *Tonight You're Mine.*
Steely Dan — *Gaucho*
Joe Ely — *Live Shots.*
The Cure — *17 Seconds*

And I'm sure there's a zillion others but they're the recent releases that come to hand. The thing that excited me most last year was discovering the wondrous nature of so much soul music — there isn't much rock'n'roll that matches **James Brown, Aretha Franklin, Otis Redding, Smokey Robinson, Sam Cooke, The Temptations, Al Green** etc etc etc

SINGLES

As for singles — they're something I can never begin to list. Totally off the top of my head the ones I remember most are both **Saints** releases, the **Barracudas** singles, all the Phantom releases, *City Slang* from **Sonic's Rendezvous Band**, **Joy Division**'s *Love Will Tear Us Apart*, **Nuvo Bloc**'s single, the 80s single on the Mouse label and all one of others which had varying periods of obsessive playing.

LIVE

The best concerts and live performances — **Roy Orbison** at the Capitol Theatre, **Magazine** at Chequers, **The Flaming Hands** most times, **The Innocents** on their good nights, **The Motels** surprisingly, **Sports** in the pubs, **Paul Kelly and The Dots** at the Manzil Room, **Broderick Smith** at the Manzil Room, **The Riptides** most nights, **Leonard Cohen** every night, **Tactics** sometimes, **Flowers** sometimes.

MISCELLANY

The best rock'n'roll book published in 1980 was Dick Hebdige's *Subcultures: The Meaning of Style*.

The saddest event of the year was the death of one of rock'n'roll's seminal figures. You know his name.

As as Raymond Chandler wrote, Goodnight, goodbye and I'd hate to be you. Just joking honest.

DONALD ROBERTSON

ALBUMS

(in no particular order)
The Clash — *London Calling*
Bruce Springsteen — *The River*
Lynton Kwesi Johnson — *Bass Culture*
Models — *AlphaBravoCharlie etc.*
Flowers — *Icehouse*
Cold Chisel — *East*
XTC — *Black Sea*
Easybeats — *Absolute Anthology*
The Associates — *The Affectionate Punch*
Gang of Four — *Entertainment.*
The Cure — *Seventeen Seconds.*
Magazine — *The Correct Use of Soap*
UB40 — *Signing Off*
Marianne Faithfull — *Broken English (import version)*

SINGLES

Dead Kennedy's — *Holiday in Cambodia*
Joy Division — *Love Will Tear Us Apart*
Flowers — *Can't Help Myself*
Birthday Party — *Friend Catcher*
Nuvo Bloc — *Atomic Fiction*
Numbers — *Modern Song*
Saints — *Paralytic Tonight & Always*
Split Enz — *I Got You*

LIVE

Magazine — Thebarton Town Hall Adelaide
No Fixed Address — Arkaba Adelaide (supporting Taj Mahal)
Ramones — Thebarton Town Hall
Bad Poets — Burnside Town Hall Adelaide
Cold Chisel — Arkaba Adelaide
Cure — Arkaba
Redgum — Legtrap Hotel Westlakes
Sports — Crystal Ballroom Melbourne
Models — Crystal Ballroom Adelaide.
The Romantics — Hilton Hotel Sydney

and many more I was too drunk at the time to recall.

MISCELLANY

BOOK. I didn't get the chance to read any new ones!
FILM *Quadrophenia*
Let's hope '81 is even better

ADRIAN RYAN

ALBUMS

The Jam — *Setting Sons*
Clash — *London Calling*
Bruce Springsteen — *The River*
Link Wray — *Bullshot*

SINGLES

Lipps Inc. — *Funkytown*
Roy Orbison/Emmylou Harris — *That Lovin You Feelin Again*
Joy Division — *Love Will Tear Us Apart*
Cuban Heels — *Little Girl*
Birthday Party — *Happy Birthday*
Jam — *Start*
Cliff Richard — *We Don't Talk Anymore*

LIVE

Dots — Hearts late November

MISCELLANY

Books Ian McEwen *Concrete Garden*
Film *Blood Money*

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